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[THE FATAL STEP.]

THE GOLDEN MASK.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"The Stranger's Secret," "Man and His Idol," "The Seventh Marriage," "The Warning Voice," &c. &c.

CHAPTER XXXI.

TREACHERY.

Bertram. Will thou betray me?
Prior. Lives the wretch beneath these walls to do it?
Sorrow enough hath bowed thy head already.

THE cry which the terrified child, Aglaia, had raised had alarmed the house.

"The man! the man!" she went shrieking out into the garden, and Boldero, stooping over his verbenas, raised his head with a look of dismay.

"Nonsense, darling," he said, "what man?"
"The man nurse says will come and fetch me if I am naughty."

"Silly nurse! There is no such man. Where did you think you saw him?"

"On the darriet stairs."

"No, no! What was he like?"

"Tall—oh, so tall, and black, and—oh, papa, go drive him away."

The child, whose terror was clearly genuine, buried her face in the skirt of her father's coat, to shut out the apparition which her fears had conjured up out of the handsome face and manly form of Ambrose Copley.

Laughing as best he could—laughing through his fears of what this incident, trifling as it was, might lead to—the father quitted the garden, and entered the house, followed by Aglaia at a respectful distance.

As he feared the servants were alarmed. They had been attracted by the child's cry, and confronted him as he entered the house. One, a red-headed girl, with a freckled face, and eyes of the muddy green hue of a standing pool, stood at the foot of the stairs with a bold look on her face, and a self-reliant attitude which filled the Star with dismay. She was only Aglaia's

nurse—the author of the convenient fiction about The Man—but he could not have slunk past her more abjectly had she been armed with a warrant for his apprehension for aiding and abetting the escape of a felon.

Nevertheless he contrived to call up a smile into his broad face, as he called to the child to follow him.

"It is only fancy, darling," he exclaimed, "there is no one. Come with papa!"

She drew back.

"And nurse?" she asked.

Boldero hesitated: and it was palpable that he did so. To take the girl prying into his room might result in disastrous consequences. He stole a glance at her, saw that her misty eyes were fixed intently—meaningly, he thought—upon him, and saw that it was inevitable.

"Yes," he faltered.

So the three moved in a little procession to the top of the house, as far as the door of the secret chamber in which were manufactured those miracles of humorous impersonation that enraptured the British public, and perpetually recruited it in slang and ribaldry.

The door of this room was open as the child had left it. The door of the staircase leading up from it was open also. What was to be done? The great, burly man felt a cold dew of terror break out over him as he stood on the threshold, trembling. Another moment, and Ambrose Copley might steal down those stairs and stand in that very doorway.

At the thought he involuntarily turned; the misty eyes were looking over his shoulder, hard into the room.

"There is no one here, darling, you see," he exclaimed, addressing the child in a despairing attempt to put an end to the situation.

"There! In there!" she cried, hiding her sunny head beneath the nurse's apron.

Aglaia, what was to be done?

It would not do to permit the nurse to pass up the stairs, that would inevitably lead to the discovery of the fugitive concealed there.

But would it do to order her away?

A moment's reflection showed the improbability of the woman's really having any suspicion of the real state of the case.

"You can go, nurse; Aglaia will play here," he said, as quietly as he could, "and take care how you excite the child's fancy with these idle tales."

The green, misty eyes met his own, fixed and full of meaning.

"Excite her fancy with idle tales?" she repeated in the form of a question.

"Yes."

"About The Man, you mean?"

"Certainly. You see the consequence. She is alarmed at nothing."

"She's old enough to know whether she did see a man or whether she didn't," returned the nurse with a steady look.

"See a man? Absurd! You know that no one has entered this house to-day."

"Yes, sir; that's right, right enough, not to-day. But, but—"

She hesitated, then added in desperation:

"I wouldn't take a minute, sir, to look round, and then the child would be satisfied, and we should hear no more of it."

As she spoke, the girl had darted forward, and was in the act of slipping past him towards the stairs.

He seized her arm, and thrust her back with a seriousness which betrayed his alarm.

"No," he cried, "this room is sacred. You know it: go. Leave the child, and go."

She could but obey, and slowly and reluctantly backed towards the door, keeping her misty eyes fixed suspiciously and accusingly on him to the last. The click of the lock struck on her ear as she turned from the door.

The moment he was alone, Boldero pressed a kiss upon his darling's brow, and then, leaving her, darted up the stairs, into the garret Ambrose Copley had occupied.

To his intense astonishment it was empty.

Everything about the room remained as he had seen it that morning. The lad's silver watch—a present from poor David Hyde to him when a boy, as

It had been a present from Hyde's father when he was a boy—hung upon a nail. His pipe, his knife, a spare necktie, a half-finished portrait of Vida from memory which he had beguiled the tedious hours in drawing, everything was as it had been. The state of the window alone differed. That was open, and that told the story of sudden and terror-prompted flight.

Half frantic at the thought of the danger to which the lad had so unnecessarily exposed himself, the good soul paced up and down the little room utterly at a loss what course to pursue.

After a little reflection he determined to sally forth and reconnoitre, keeping a sharp eye upon the roofs of the houses, and trying to ascertain by what means the runaway would be most likely to descend into the street. It was not necessary, he felt, to alarm his gentle, sympathetic wife, by confiding to her what had happened. Aglaia could be handed over to the nurse's care, and he would be able to leave, as if for the Hall in which he exercised his profession, without exciting any suspicion.

The brougham, which was part of his reputation, was only for town use; and was kept at livery some distance up the road. It was the great man's custom to walk in fine weather as far as the stables, and he simply announced his intention to do so now.

"So good bye, pet!" he exclaimed, in his jovial voice, and making a face that would make the child laugh as he parted with her at the door. "Mamma is busy; go to nurse. Where is nurse?"

She was not there. She was not in the house. Strange! Enquiry showed that she had not received permission to go out.

Further enquiry established that on coming down stairs without her charge she had run down to the gate. But there was the gate wide open, at the bottom of the garden, and she was not there. Very strange!

There might be nothing in it. There might be nothing in the girl's conduct from first to last that day. Secrets like that which Boldero was keeping are apt to make one over suspicious. He felt this; but he was uneasy in his mind as he left the house, looking this way and that, not dissatisfied.

The result of the survey was unsatisfactory. Ambrose Copley made his escape at a time when his friend was looking for him in another direction, and, as we know, they did not meet.

It was amusing to see the form that Boldero's perplexity and tribulation assumed. His professional career had begun so early in life that it had become part of his nature to be comic, at all disadvantages, and even to express the most serious emotions in an old and ludicrous fashion. Thus, much of the success he had achieved was attributed to his hat—comic singers of his class always sing hat in hand, it is indispensable. And his greatest triumphs were achieved by the manner in which he turned it to effect.

And now that his mind was troubled and absent he voluntarily adopted the tricks of the platform, and was startling to see a middle-aged gentleman in a top hat at sunset, now thrusting his hat back all it would barely hang on, then bringing it down over his eyes, while he folded his arms and assumed a general air of moroseness and ferocity; next thrusting it aside to give himself a jaunty and fish air, unconscious all the while of what he was doing.

Unconscious, too, of something still more important.

Lost to the fact that, as the shades of evening fell in and he bent his steps forwards, there grew out of the fog and the deepening gloom a figure that watched and dodged and kept, upon his trail—a figure that, never coming near enough to be seen or attract his attention, never lagged behind far enough to lose sight of him or his movements—a figure that had nothing to single it out, or mark it distinct from the hundreds of wayfarers who passed him by as the Star and this his unknown satellite drew nearer town.

When the Star stopped into that part of his reputation, the brougham, as it stood ready for him at the stable door, the satellite hailed a cab softly and followed.

When the Champion Comique emerged before the blazing footlights, obedient to the howls and yells of delight with which his public greeted him, this figure, seated in a corner, looked up quietly, and watched his every movement through the long degradation which constituted his nightly performance, until he gave his last bow and went.

The figure went also.

It did not leave him. It was like his shadow when he emerged, pale and anxious, from the Hall which was well-nigh buried behind the posters announcing his greatness. Like his shadow, too, it tracked him home, not knowing how restless and disquieted he was; now loth to enter the dogs of his home-paradise, and now he forgot even the watering of his plants in

his anxiety to know what had happened in his absence.

The nurse with the red hair, the freckles, and the green misty eyes, came to the door in answer to his rap.

It was not her place to open the door, and the incident, trifling as it was, caused all the blood to rush from his red face.

She held the door wide as he passed in, meeting his enquiring eyes unabashed. She held it open also when he had passed in, for all that a cold draught of the night air blew in her face, and rushed through the hall.

"Shut the door, my girl!" he exclaimed without looking back.

"Yes, sir."

The door closed with a bang, and Boldero startled at the shock, turned his head, and saw that some one had entered besides himself, and was coming towards him.

It was the figure.

Boldero looked at him with something more than surprise, he had been so little conscious of being followed by this ordinary man wrapped to the chin in an ordinary frieze coat.

"May I ask your business?" he said.

"You may," was the quiet answer.

"What do you want?"

"You."

The whole thing was so unexpected, that the unfortunate man could only stand staring in mute amazement.

"Me?" he managed to stammer.

"You," the man repeated.

Following some odd association of ideas, the Star shifted his gaze from the face of the figure to that of the red-haired, freckled girl; her stagnant eyes were ready for him, and met his without flinching. She was standing by the dining-room, now, her left hand on the handle! With a sickly smile on her face she stooped and threw open the door.

It was clearly a signal, for as she did so two persons, unmistakably policemen in private clothes, came out. They simply stepped out, and neither smiled nor spoke.

It was the figure who had dogged Boldero all night who addressed him, and in a quiet and confidential tone.

"You look surprised, sir," he said, "and yet you ought not to be. A man who plans what you've planned, and carries out what you've carried out, ought to be prepared for the worst. Whether you're principal or accomplice I won't say; but either way it's likely to prove a bad business for you."

That broadly comic face of Boldero's had often thrown audiences into roars of laughter as it expressed pretended terror; it expressed real terror now, and was white and twitching, but with nothing to laugh at in it.

"You allude to the—the—murder—"

"Oh, you guess that?"

"Because I have been pointed at, cruelly pointed at, in connection with it—I who am as innocent as you yourself can be."

"No doubt. And your friend, the young ruffian who has been concealed under this roof since he broke out of prison, what of him? Where is he?"

"I know no more than the dead."

"You know he was here yesterday?"

The accused hesitated.

"You have no right to try to entrap me into admissions which you may use against me," he said.

"Quite right; but I am an officer of police with a warrant against you and your friend. And if you try to screen him, and to defeat the ends of justice in that way, you must take the consequences. We're determined to probe this case to the bottom. We're determined to find out who the guilty parties are, and if you make up your mind to thwart us, you'll take the consequences, that's all. Now, Redman, you've searched the house, what have you found?"

The officer addressed as Redman plunged his hand into the gaping pockets of his overcoat and brought out a handful of different articles. Making a selection from these he held out one.

It was a silver watch.

"Name of David Hyde, gift of his father," he said, opening the case with his broad thumb and reading, "hid up in the roof."

"You hear," cried the figure, "the watch belonging to the murdered man is found hidden away in your house. Many a man has swung on slighter evidence than that. What do you say?"

"I am as much astonished as you are," he replied, hesitatingly.

"Stuff!" cried the officer indignantly. "We find it in your possession. How do you account for it? Look here Smithers—Boldero—whatever your last name is; if this proves nothing else, it proves complicity, and that's enough to settle you. Remember

we haven't a quite clean bill against you. There was a little matter years ago—"

The white face grew livid.

"Not that," cried Boldero, pleading in a tone of agony. "It was years and years ago, and I was innocent. I swear to you by all that's holy, I was innocent."

"You were convicted. That's all I know. And a conviction is a conviction, as you know as well as me."

The wretched man, utterly overcome by this unexpected blow, hid his livid face in his trembling hands for a second or two; then, as if suddenly and for the first time realizing the consequences of his position, he looked up aghast.

"You're not here to—to take me?" he asked.

The officer nodded, and his subordinates also nodded sympathetically.

"But my wife, my child, my darling treasure! Oh, you cannot! This is cruel, beyond all measure cruel and unjust! I tell you I am as innocent as a child of all this! I can explain my conduct from first to last."

"Can you explain where your accomplice Copley is?"

"No."

"You want? You're determined?"

"I cannot. I know no more than you know."

The officer shook his head incredulously.

"If you will have it so," he said, "come on!"

He turned towards the door, at which the red-haired girl with the freckled face stood ready, with the bold look still in her eyes, and the sickly smile about her treacherous lips.

The two men in undress prepared to follow.

While the door was yet unopened a faint walling cry sounded through the house, and turning they saw the wife of the unhappy man resting down the stairs, clasping to her bosom the little Aglaia, whose shining hair streamed over the mother's shoulder.

"Oh, my husband, what is this—what dreadful thing is this?" she asked, in imploring accents.

"Nothing to alarm you, my girl," said Boldero, with tears in his eyes as he clasped her and the child to his breast. "I am going with these gentlemen—a mere form. I shall soon be back, or—on you will hear from me!"

She started back and looked him in the face.

Her true womanly instinct showed her what was happening.

"No!" she exclaimed. "They are taking you for the murder!"

"Not so bad as that, wife," he replied, in a choking voice. "It's because I won't tell what has become of poor Ambrose. I can't tell, for I don't know; and if I did, I wouldn't!"

"You wouldn't?" questioned the officer.

"No! I wouldn't get an innocent lad into trouble to save myself. I wouldn't. There!"

The officer and his men looked at one another with a sneer on their lips; and the red-haired traitress—she was the sweetheart of one of the policemen, and had betrayed the secret of Ambrose's hiding-place to him, smiled contemptuously.

As for the poor wife and the terrified child they clung to the prisoner, and buried their faces against his throbbing heart, and were left sobbing and wailing as he was torn away.

CHAPTER XXXII.

AMBROSE COPLEY WITH THE GIPSIES.

And so at last you find my tribe.

And so I set thee in the midst.

Browning.

THE words which welcomed Ambrose Copley to the gipsy encampment only awoke in him suspicion and misgiving.

"Your lordship is welcome!"

What could he make of that—earnestly as the cry was uttered—except that it was spoken in derision, or that the woman who confronted him, was mad, or foolish.

He did not know that this same woman, with the fierce eyes and the malignant expression of face, was the same who had announced to the Lady Edith the consequences which would attend the return of Fabian Temple to society. And had he known this, it would merely have increased his surprise, without affording any clue to the mystery of his reception.

The camp was of the ordinary kind. There was nothing to distinguish it from thousands of a similar description to be found at nightfall on the outskirts of villages, or springing up wherever pieces of waste land offer a temptation to vagabondism.

Two or three canvas tents hastily run up surrounded the fire, and afforded a shelter to those who, having finished their evening meal, threw themselves on the bare earth for a few hours' rest.

Only three men reclined in the warm circle about the blazing logs, and these, disturbed by the arrival

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of a stranger, looked up sleepily, like animals disturbed in their lair, but apprehending no immediate danger.

Without heeding these, Ambrose addressed the woman who had accosted him.

"I am no lord," he said, "but a poor lad sorely in need of a night's shelter."

"Your lordship may command it," was the reply.

"My lordship—if you will have it so—is grateful," he returned.

"You have only to command," said the woman.

"Whatever you please—we cannot refuse. You ask for shelter; our best tent is at your disposal. You will need food—it shall be dressed for you."

She moved a step towards the fire, and stooping, threw on fuel from a heap of logs and underwood which lay near at hand.

"Stay!" cried Ambrose. "Let me understand this. It is not your custom to receive every wanderer thus?"

"No."

She looked upon him, grasping a fresh handful of fuel, and her face was quite serious in expression—that not a line in its seamed and ruffled surface moved.

"Why, then, do you welcome me in this fashion?"

"Because we know you, and the claims you have on our gratitude and consideration. You come here a fugitive, flying from justice, with a brand upon your name, and a desperate charge against you—"

"You know this?"

"Does not all the world know it?"

"True; but you recognize me. And, knowing what you do, you bid me welcome!"

"Ay—the gipsy's welcome—most warm when the world looks coldest, as it looks on Ambrose Copley now."

"My name? You know my name?"

"And the cloud that rests upon it."

"You know that I am accused—"

"Of murder."

The youth started in dismay at the word.

"I understand," he cried, his face flushing even in the red light of the flames; "you recall my face and the reward they have set upon my capture. That secures me the gipsy's welcome. That wins me my title. Fool that I was to put myself in your treacherous hands!"

Impatient and indignant, the Gipsy, of the Mist, as she had called herself, raised her outstretched fingers to motion him into silence.

"Peace!" she cried, in a hissing whisper; "be silent, and I can both shelter and save you. Raise the camp, and even I may be powerless against the hope of the reward for your capture."

He turned from her with a sullen, impatient gesture.

"You will not trust me?" the woman demanded.

"Trust!" he ejaculated, indignantly.

"And yet I have nursed you upon these knees."

"You?"

"I have lulled you to sleep in these arms, and watched and tended you when I might have had gold for the feeble life that was so easy to take—as many golden guineas as there were drops of blood in the little veins that a pin's point might have drained."

Ambrose bent a searching look on the woman's face.

"This is mere invention," he said.

"It is the truth."

"Impossible. An idle fabrication, or you dream or date. I can trace back my life step by step to its beginning."

"Can you? To your birth?"

He hesitated.

"Yes," he replied, after a moment's thought. "I know the story well. Every particular is familiar to me."

"Good! You know that your father was a man of wealth and position, but of feeble mind; fond of travelling, and wasting his means on paintings, statues, and such like follies that kept him roving from country to country, restless and dissatisfied as to the nature of such men to be."

"The hot blood of the impulsive youth resented this slur on his father's character."

"You, who know so much, should know this," he said, "that my father, the heir to a fortune which had been dissipated by the extravagance of succeeding generations, lived abroad in order that he might give the family affairs the opportunity of righting themselves, which unfortunately was impossible. The case was too desperate. This was why he lived among the galleries of Italy."

"Where he married?"

"Where he made the daughter of an Englishman his wife, and where, within a year he buried her."

"Within a year? Yes; and in six months he too was in his grave. You've heard the story of your birth, and what followed it?"

"My mother's death, the loss of a father's fostering care."

"Not so; for that was never yours."

The green eyes, watching the frowning face of the

young man in the clear firelight, noted that it expressed surprise and curiosity.

"Your father died ignorant of your existence," the gipsy added.

"What? To whom, then, was I indebted for subsistence—for education?" Ambrose asked.

"To those who now welcome you to their camp."

She waved her hand with a regal grace towards the tents.

"One moment," cried the astonished youth; "I must know more! The title you have bestowed on me—the facts you have just stated—the welcome you give me, hunted down and branded as I am—is it all a delusion, a mockery, a snare? If not, since you have told me so much, confide the rest to me. Tell me who I am—what name I am entitled to bear!"

"How I became the adopted son of the man I have so long called father! You know all this—you can tell me if you will! Or you are only entrapping me into fancied security that you may get the reward for betraying me."

The gipsy listened to him, leaning on one of the fagots from which the cauldron had been suspended. As he proceeded, she drew herself slowly up, and the green glitter of her eyes flashed angrily.

"Distrust? Still distrust?" she cried. "What if I had spoken no word? You would have lain down in our tents unsuspecting and an easy prey. Think you we warn those we seek to betray? By silence I should have gained your gratitude: why should I have aroused your suspicion?"

The argument was convincing. Ambrose felt it so.

"I am impatient of mystery," was all he could answer in his own defence.

The woman regarded him with a scornful look.

"You would learn more, and you regard those who alone can instruct you with suspicion and mistrust. You who come with the taint of blood upon you! Go! There is the tent, feast or sleep, as you will. For to-night I am dumb."

Seeing her angry and perturbed, Ambrose would have urged something by way of apology; but she was inflexible. To his questions and protestations she turned a deaf ear, and when she had summoned a drowsy girl, with a tangled web of hair like hemp, dabbling about her face and into her wolfish eyes, to attend to his necessities, she strode out of the light of the fire and was seen no more.

In spite of his distress of mind—and he alone knew how deep that distress was—Ambrose was faint with long fasting, and the sight of a pheasant with a hugh block of bread, and a stone bottle of beer, gave him unfeigned satisfaction.

A man less hungry and more squeamish might have made enquiries as to how the bread came into the hands of his entertainers. An epicure might have objected that to boil a pheasant is to spoil it.

Ambrose Copley did not distress himself on these points. He ate with avidity; and then, having been shown a vacant place under a dingy canopy, where a rug was already spread, he thankfully accepted the accommodation, wrapped the rug about his shoulders, and giving one thought to Vida—poor, desolate, heart-broken Vida—closed his eyes and soon lapsed into the forgetfulness of slumber.

Had he slept an hour, or a long night, when shrieks and cries and the discharge of a pistol caused him to spring up and rush into the air?

It could hardly have been long, for the stars were shining overhead.

The fire, too, was blazing, and round it there raged a fierce and desperate conflict. Hand to hand struggles, fierce grappling, wrestling and cursing, the shrieks of women and the screams of children increased the tumult.

What had happened?

Dazed and bewildered he asked the question he knew not of whom, whether of friend or foe, and the only answer came from a deep voice that whispered in his ear—"Fly! make your escape!"

Before he could either answer or act on the friendly hint, his bewildered brain was conscious of some one addressing the camp.

"Listen to reason, can't you?" he heard shouted in a fierce tone.

"We shall have that man dead or alive. We're come here for him, and we'll have him. Give him up, and not a hair of your heads shall suffer. Resist, and down you go, like dogs. Now, then; no nonsense. Out with him!"

A sullen silence followed this harangue.

"Is he coming?" the same voice asked in an impatient tone.

"No!" yelled a dozen throats like one.

"Look out then!"

As the words were uttered Ambrose Copley rushed forward.

"Stay! Take me. I give myself up," he shouted.

It was too late.

While he was in the act of speaking there was a

second report of fire-arms, and a bullet whizzing through the air struck him to the ground.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE FATAL STEP.

Mine enemy
Constrains me to abide the fatal die,
My rashness, not my reason east.

Sheridan's *Knave*.

THERE was a Drawing-room at St. James's Palace, and the Earl of Courtland and his daughter Edith were to be present.

Though the Lady Edith had been presented two or three years before, attendance on such occasions was not such an ordinary matter as to be regarded with indifference.

The toilet was a subject of moment, of greater moment, perhaps, than on the occasion of the presentation. Then her beauty was in its freshest bloom. She was admitted to be the belle among all those who passed through the Presence Chamber, and youth and surpassing beauty can afford to be a little indifferent to the exactions of fashion.

She was still beautiful, but—changed.

The passions are more fatal to beauty than even time itself.

So it was noted by keen observers that since the death of Lionel Seagrave, she had never looked any more than she had felt, herself. When that blow fell upon her heart, crushing and lacerating it, the effect became visible alike in her wasted face and her altered manner.

And as her pride was intensified rather than diminished—as the one true passion of her heart had left her nature adamant, just as the burning lava cools into stone—so she now called to her aid every resource by which her resplendent charms might dazzle and bewilder the eyes of her admirers.

While the carriage was at the door, and the earl, with his gloves on, was pacing the library grumbling at the inordinate time his daughter's toilet had taken, and protesting that they should be crushed to death in the crowd that always blocked up the corridors on these occasions, Fabian Temple arrived.

He had received a little three-cornered note from Edith summoning him to her boudoir, into which he was immediately shown.

Hardly had he seated himself before the lady sailed in, her train sweeping the ground as she did so.

She looked superb.

The court attire—feathers and jewels, rippling satin, and billows of rose-tinted brocade, spraying gold—became her to admiration.

Fabian held his breath as he looked on in unbounded admiration.

"You expressed a wish to see me in my best—or worst, as it might happen," she said, smiling at his embarrassment.

"I did," he replied, "and how can I express my admiration?"

"Your eyes save your lips the trouble of putting it into words. I am so glad that you are satisfied."

So glad!

And yet an involuntary sigh escaped her. The scene recalled with painful vividness the day of her presentation, when she had first worn a court dress, and Lionel had looked on with the same rapturous look that now lit up the face of Fabian Temple. The thought of the man she had loved and lost well-nigh overcame her for the moment, but recovering herself she again addressed her companion, and with a meaning emphasis in her words.

"You have the same right to appear in the presence of your sovereign that I have," she said.

"Your profession gives you the privilege—you and your wife!"

"Edith!"

"Is it not so? A barrister's wife is entitled to presentation."

"Oriel, oriel! You only mock me! What recognition could I look for with Morda in such a scene?"

Edith sighed.

"Always in your way!" she exclaimed, "always an impediment to you!"

Fabian's cheek flushed as he bit his lip.

These covert attacks, these sneers and insinuations regarding his wife, were always on this dangerous woman's lips.

She lost no opportunity of reminding him of his weakness and want of purpose, or of inciting him to the step she had once so plainly hinted at—that of disowning the validity of his marriage.

"What am I to do?" he said, in a despairing tone.

"It is useless to mourn over the inevitable."

Superb scorn curled her aristocratic lips.

"I once thought you courageous," was the taunt that escaped them.

"And now?"

"I dare not give you the name I should."

"What? You hold me a coward?"

"Are you surprised? Is your indignation genuine? With one word you can repair the error of your life—you can set yourself free—you can whistle off this woman who clogs your progress, and whose jealous vindictiveness threatens your life. One word is enough, and you do not speak it. You dare not speak it."

He winced under the accusation of cowardice, but did not attempt to justify himself.

Even if love had animated her in the part she was playing, the haughty beauty must have despised him as he stood there, with a burning cheek, with downcast eyes and heaving breast, unable to dispute the truth of this charge, and without an excuse to plead in his behalf.

"I have not the heart to do it," he said at length.

"Because you love her?"

"No, no, it is not love. I have felt that passion for you, and you alone, Edith; but she has been ever so gentle and so truthful; she has watched over me in my poverty with such affection, that—that I cannot bear the thought of discarding her now that Providence—now that I am well to do. Besides, I know that our marriage was good in every respect; thoroughly legal and proper, and with that knowledge, it is playing a scoundrel's part to take advantage of circumstances to my wife's ruin. That is why I hesitate."

The lady, standing before a mirror, arranged a stray ribbon, and coquettishly replied:

"It is a pity that with your advantages you should have been so long out of society."

"Assuredly," he answered, "but why?"

"Because you have learned to think and look at things in a manner quite foreign to the views taken in our circles. Do you think I should tolerate a man of my own rank who told me he loved me, and in the same breath talked of obstacles. And such obstacles!"

"But society itself—" he interposed.

"Society itself," she cried, "would scout as ridiculous folly scruples such as yours. You ally yourself in some half orthodox way to a person of no consideration whatever, who turns out to be spiteful and vindictive, and scarcely hesitates to charge you with a crime which society does not tolerate—"

The face of the listener grew ashy white at the words.

"And you have not the manhood to assert your freedom when the opportunity is made for you. Worst of all you justify your pusillanimity on the plea of—conscience—as if society knew anything of conscience!"

"You are merciless, Edith," said Fabian.

"I am right, and I have the courage to speak out when fifty women would remain timidly silent. And, merciless or not, since we have gone so far, it is time I should demand to know whether this is to go on for ever! This weakness, cowardice, incoherence, call it what you will? Is your boasted conscience still to dictate childish consideration for the wife—as you call her—whom you despise, and injustice towards the woman whom you affect to love?"

"Affect to love!" he repeated, in a reproachful tone.

"Yes," she returned. "Affect—what is it but an affectation when, with the language of flattery on your lips, you do not hesitate to compromise the object of it? Do you think that I make no sacrifices in permitting your attentions? Do you fancy that the tongue of slander is dumb, and forget that I am losing opportunities which no woman can afford to neglect? If you are blind to these things, and your conscience takes no heed of them, it is time that I should speak—I who suffer alike by your ardour and your weakness."

Astonished at this outburst Fabian knew not what to answer.

He felt that the decisive moment had come; that he must either yield himself up body and soul to the influence of the woman who exercised an infatuation like that of a sorceress over him, or prepare to relinquish her utterly and without hope of reconciliation.

The woman who hesitates, says the poet, is lost. Equally true is it of the man who suffers himself to finger in indecision on the neutral ground which separates right from wrong.

This Fabian did.

He hesitated. The voice which rang in his ears and should have startled him like the shriek of the Furies, charmed and beguiled him as the Siren's melody tempts the mariner to his doom.

He hesitated, and the crisis came.

While the Lady Edith stood before the mirror, arranging the sweep of her flowing train, there was a smart tap at the door of the boudoir.

It was a powdered footman, who handed in a begrimed and clumsy note on a gold salver.

Receiving it with disgust, the lady opened it with the points of her dainty fingers, and read:

"MY LADY,—I returned from the north with my brother, the Rev. Abner Gath, by the mail train at midnight. You will understand by this time why I write this: if you desire to renew our interrupted interview an unexpected opportunity will present itself to-morrow."

"MARGARET GATH."

There was a sparkle in the Lady Edith's eyes and a glow on her cheek as she read this, which did not escape Fabian's attention.

"Something pleases you," he said.

"It should," she answered—"it would thrill me with happiness—if you still loved me."

"Edith, I adore you! I cannot exist without you!" he burst out, with passionate intensity.

"What! If you were free would you make me—"

"My wife! I swear it."

"Enough. This scrap of paper, then, seals our fate!"

She crumpled it hastily in the palm of her hand as the earl, impatient of waiting, entered the boudoir.

(To be continued.)

THE DEATH RING.

WHEN Dr. Edward Landsfield was a young man, and just entering upon the practice of medicine, he located himself in the then town and now city of L—. There was but one other physician in the place, and he was an old man, who was getting too far advanced in years to pay the proper attention to his business.

The young doctor had a hard time at first; for the people of the place had a strange and bitter prejudice against young physicians, and for a while turned their faces from him.

It was fully a year before he had anything at all to do; and had not been provided with money enough to support himself in a shabby way during that time, he would have starved.

As it was he was almost discouraged, and was seriously contemplating a speedy departure from town. He was sitting in the little room he called his office, one evening, puffing away vigorously at his German pipe, and pondering the question whether to go away from L— or remain and fight it out a little longer. It was snowing heavily out of doors, and the wind was howling around the house at a furious rate. It was an excellent night for thinking, and the doctor felt that he would be perfectly safe from callers and patients, and would have ample time to discuss the important question which perplexed him.

He had thought it over a hundred times before, but had never fully made up his mind either way in regard to it.

He could see very little to be accomplished by remaining, if indeed there was anything. But on the other hand, to go away seemed like cowardice. It seemed like abandoning the field in disgrace, like a victory of ignorant prejudices over science. He was thoroughly perplexed.

Suddenly he was aroused by the loud ringing of his doorbell. In genuine astonishment he opened the door, and saw standing before it a man well wrapped up and covered with snow.

"Is Dr. Landsfield at home?" he asked hurriedly.

"I am he," replied the young physician, in a state of bewilderment. "What do you want with me?"

"Old Mr. Gravely, on the hill, is very ill, sir, was the reply, "and you must go to him right away."

"Why don't you go for Dr. Jones?" asked the young man.

"I have been for him, sir," was the reply, "but he says he isn't well enough to venture out into such a storm. You'd better hurry, doctor, for the old man is bad, I can tell you."

Dr. Landsfield needed no urging. It seemed to him an unusually lucky chance that had thrown into his hands as a patient the wealthiest and most influential man in the place.

He did not pause to think much upon the subject, but hastily attired himself for his errand, and in half an hour was standing by the sick man's bed. Mr. Gravely was indeed ill, and his case was one that required the exercise of considerable skill on the part of the physician.

The young doctor, who was really a man of great ability, managed it ably, and as the storm continued for two days, and old Dr. Jones grew worse instead of better, he was not interrupted for a week; and in the meantime he was called in to see several other of the old doctor's patients, whom in that worthy's sickness were forced to accept a young man, or do without medical advice.

He gave entire satisfaction in every case, and when

Dr. Jones appeared on the ground once more, he fully endorsed the young man's practice in the case of Mr. Gravely, and even went so far as to propose to him to become his partner, with a view to making him his successor when he should retire from his practice, as he intended to do at no very distant day.

Dr. Landsfield was fairly overwhelmed by this sudden good fortune, and for a while could scarcely believe it real. He made the best of it, however, and accepted the offer held out to him.

Once under the wing of the old doctor, his fortunes were sure; for the people of L— seemed to think that as a partner of the man they had looked up to so long in matters of health and sickness, he was a very different person from the friendless young man they had frowned so coldly upon because of his youth.

When Mr. Gravely recovered, he took a strange fancy to Dr. Landsfield, and declared his intention to do all in his power to secure to the young man a prosperous future.

With two such friends, his career could not be otherwise than prosperous; and in two years after his sudden change of fortune he was the only physician of L—, Dr. Jones having retired, and turned over to him all his large practice.

Mr. Gravely was a widower, and a childless man. It had been the greatest desire of his life to have a son to inherit his fortune, but Providence had denied him this blessing.

About the time of his wife's death, he had adopted a young girl whom he found in a distant country town, and she had been for six years the reputed heiress of his wealth. She had taken his name, and many persons looked upon her as the very embodiment of all the filial virtues.

Julia Gravely was in her twenty-third year. She was tall and stately. Her dark, rich complexion, large, lustrous black eyes and luxuriant hair at once revealed her parentage.

Her parents had died when she was a mere child, and she had been taken out of pity for her lonely condition, by a worthy couple, who reared her until her sixteenth year, when Mr. Gravely, who chanced to meet her, was charmed with her beauty and vivacity, and adopted her.

Her father had been an Italian artist, possessed of genius and its usual accompaniment—poverty; and her mother had been an actress of some reputation in her native land, who had forsaken a promising career there to follow her husband to England.

Julia united in her own character the impassioned and unsteady disposition of her father and the fierceness and subtlety of her mother.

She was radiantly beautiful, and she knew that it was that which had first drawn Mr. Gravely to her.

She made good use of it to retain the hold she had gained upon him; though in spite of all the kindness he had bestowed upon her, she really cared very little for him, yet managed to make him and every one else believe she was devoted to him. She overwhelmed him with her demonstrations of affection, which were as hollow as they were violent. She gained her end by them, however, and succeeded in convincing the old man that she was as entirely devoted to him as though she had been his own child.

When Dr. Landsfield appeared on the scene she regarded him with an intense dislike. There seemed to exist in each opposing qualities which would keep them for ever apart. As she marked the growing fondness of her adopted father for the young physician, she became jealous of him.

She feared that he might either deprive her of the fortune which she had always believed would be hers one day, or divide it with her, and she coveted it all herself. Sometimes, as she thought of this, she felt that she could destroy the intruder, so deeply did she hate him.

Dr. Landsfield was sincerely attached to Mr. Gravely. He had from the first regarded the old man as his best friend, and the many earnest proofs of friendship that he had received bound him to Mr. Gravely by the strongest ties of esteem and gratitude. One day he was sitting with the old man in his library, when the latter, producing a paper, handed it to him, and said:

"Edward, since I have known you I have looked upon you as I would have regarded a son, had I been blessed with one. I am a very old man, and I may die at any moment. In view of this I have prepared my will, which I wish you to read."

The doctor took the will and read it in silence, but the flush and strange look which passed over his face as he did so, showed that he was not a little astonished by it. The will gave to him the entire estate of his friend, upon the condition that he would marry Julia Gravely. In case the marriage did not take place, he was given the bulk of the estate—about fifty thousand pounds, while Julia was given twenty thousand.

"I feel deeply grateful to you for your generosity,"

he said, after a pause; "but I hope it may be many years yet before I shall profit by it. But why do you wish me to marry your adopted daughter?" he asked abruptly. "She has never shown any preference for me. Indeed, I have always thought she disliked me."

"I wish to leave her safely provided for," said his friend, with a smile. "A young woman with so large a fortune and without a protector is in danger of being badly treated in the world. If you can marry her before I die it will make me very happy. She is a good girl, and you will hardly find one more beautiful and accomplished."

"Does Miss Gravelly know of this?" asked Dr. Landsfield.

"No. I shall show her the will to-day, and to-morrow I will have it executed in due form."

The conversation was abruptly changed, and the doctor soon afterwards took his departure. A few hours later, Julia Gravelly, sitting by her adopted father, read the draft of the will.

Her face was turned from him, and he did not see the fierce and almost fiendish expression that swept over it as she learned the contents of the paper.

There was still a dangerous expression in the eyes as she turned to him, but her face was calm and smiling.

"I thought I was to have been your sole heiress," she said, carelessly.

"True, dear. There is now a will at my lawyer's, signed and sealed, constituting you the sole heiress of my fortune. But this suits me better. I shall leave you perfectly comfortable, and if you see fit to marry Edward Landsfield you will have all I have to give. To-morrow I shall cancel my former will and replace it with this. But tell me, dear, what do you think of it?"

"It is so sudden that I cannot make up my mind," she said, seriously. "To-morrow I will talk more freely with you."

She left him with a kiss, and sought her room. Once there, her calmness vanished, and she gave way to an uncontrollable outburst of fury.

She paced the floor hurriedly, talking to herself angrily in her native tongue, and her small hands were clenched so tightly that the nails drew blood from the delicate palms.

When she went down to tea that evening she was quieter, and as she met her adopted father every trace of passion had vanished. There was a strange and brilliant light in her eyes, but he did not notice this.

While sitting at the table, he saw that she wore a strange and curious ring that he had never seen before, and he asked her how she came by it.

"When my mother died," she replied, composedly, "she left a little casket containing a few trinkets for me. In a note which accompanied it she stated that this ring had been in the possession of her family for over two hundred years."

Nothing more was said concerning the ring, and when Julia left the old man at his library door, she pressed his hand tenderly, and said in a strained and unnatural tone:

"To-morrow, my father, we will talk about that will."

Mr. Gravelly drew his hand from her with an exclamation of pain.

"Your ring has cut my hand, I believe," he said, abruptly. He held it up to the light, but discovering no sign of a wound, passed into the library.

Towards midnight Dr. Landsfield was hurriedly summoned to attend Mr. Gravelly. The old man had been suddenly smitten with apoplexy, and the case was urgent.

Without a moment's delay the doctor hastened to the house. He found Mr. Gravelly lying insensible upon a sofa in the library.

Julia and the housemaid were standing by him—the former calm and silent, and the latter overwhelmed with grief.

He was informed that the old man had been found lying on the floor in an unconscious state by one of servants who had gone into the library for some purpose.

How long he had lain there no one could tell. It might have been several minutes, or perhaps several hours, as he had been in the library ever since supper. As soon as he learned this, the doctor set to work.

It was indeed a bad case. There was every symptom of apoplexy in its most fatal form, and at a glance the doctor saw that human skill would avail but little. He used every exertion that science was aware of, but in vain. Death had claimed the old man.

As Dr. Landsfield sat by the side of his dying friend, with his hand on his pulse, and anxiously noting every beat, he could not help wondering that death should have come to him in such a form. Mr. Gravelly had never manifested the least tendency to-

wards apoplexy, and the doctor was truly perplexed in his effort to account for his being attacked with it.

He was utterly at sea, and his medical skill was of no assistance to him. Suddenly his eyes rested upon Mr. Gravelly's hand. It was a smooth, white hand, one that would show a cut or scratch instantly.

As he gazed at it, Dr. Landsfield saw on the inside of the middle finger two small marks of a nature so singular that he bent down to notice them. They were very small, but seemed as though they had been made by the claws of some diminutive beast, and from the appearance of the wounds he felt sure that they had been made very recently.

Something, he could not tell what, impelled him to look up, and as he did so his gaze encountered that of Julia Gravelly.

She was standing at the back of the sofa, and looking at him with an intensity of expression that startled him. Her face was ghastly pale, and her eyes shone with a kind of wild terror.

As their eyes met a sickening feeling crept over him, and with an involuntary shudder he dropped his glance upon the hand again.

Mr. Gravelly died that night, and Julia informed the doctor that the funeral would take place the next afternoon.

Mr. Gravelly had frequently said while living that he wished them to bury him within twenty-four hours after his death, and Julia was determined that his wishes should be carried out.

The doctor told her that although the symptoms in his friend's case all pointed to apoplexy as the cause of his death, he was not convinced of it, and wished to make a post mortem examination of the body, to ascertain the true cause of the affliction that had fallen upon her. Julia started violently, and exclaimed hastily:

"No, no, not for worlds!" Then she added, more calmly, "I could not bear to have his body treated so."

Dr. Landsfield urged her to consent to the examination, but she steadily refused, and throughout the interview manifested the greatest horror at the idea. Finally, the doctor gave up the attempt and went home.

As Dr. Landsfield sat in his room that night, he thought long and earnestly over what had just transpired.

The more he dwelt upon the subject the stronger became his conviction that Mr. Gravelly's death was not caused by apoplexy; and he could not help believing that the marks on the hand were in some way connected with it.

But what could they be? Perhaps they were the marks of the bite of some poisonous insect. But no, that could not be so, for there was no insect known to him that could leave such an impress behind it. The marks looked as though they had been made by the claw of a diminutive lion.

Then the doctor thought of Julia Gravelly's strange conduct, and her vehemence in refusing to allow the post mortem examination.

It was all very strange, and he shuddered as he thought of it. Still he was not satisfied. The day was breaking when he rose from the deep reverie into which he had fallen, and went out to his stable. Saddling his horse, he rode rapidly to a neighbouring town, where he had a long interview with a brother physician who was established there. From the grave surprise of his friend it seemed that Dr. Landsfield's communication was one of unusual importance.

The funeral of Mr. Gravelly took place in the afternoon of that day.

It was largely attended by the people of the town and surrounding country, and among them was the physician upon whom Dr. Landsfield had called in the morning. When the funeral was over he went home with the latter.

It was fully midnight when two men drove hurriedly up to the door in a waggon, and removing a long, heavy box from the vehicle, carried it into the house. As the light fell upon their faces, it revealed the countenances of Dr. Landsfield and his friend Dr. Ellis.

Without speaking they proceeded to secure the room. The coffin, for the box they had brought was nothing else, was placed on a couple of chairs near a long table, the lid taken off, and the body of Mr. Gravelly laid on the table. The examination was speedily begun, as the proper instruments were all ready at hand.

"By heaven, Ellis, I was right after all."

"What is it now?" asked Dr. Ellis, pausing.

"Mr. Gravelly did not die of apoplexy. He was poisoned. See here," he continued. "Here are traces of a strong mineral poison which has produced effects precisely similar to those of that disease. See, it was infused into the blood in some way, and has done its errand well. I am confident now that this poor man was the victim of foul play, and that those wounds on the finger were the cause of his death."

"You are certainly right," said Dr. Ellis, musingly. "Poison was the cause of this man's death. But who could have administered it?"

"That is what perplexes me," was the reply.

"May not Mr. Gravelly have taken his own life?" asked Dr. Ellis.

"No, I am confident he did not. I know he had the strongest motive for wishing to live."

"I am inclined to agree with you that the wounds on the finger were the cause of his death," said Dr. Ellis, "and that fact induces me to believe that this is a case of suicide. They were beyond a doubt made by a singular instrument, of which I have lately read in a curious old Italian work left me by my father, who was profoundly learned in the mysteries of poisons. I refer to the 'death ring,' as it was called. It was very common in Italy during the seventeenth century. It is a broad, flat circlet of gold, with a moveable slide on one portion of the outer surface. By slipping back this slide, two claws of fine sharp steel, steeped in just such a poison as this we have discovered, are disclosed. The wearer of this ring, wishing to exercise his vengeance, has but to press his enemy's hand, when the sharp claws will be sure to make a slight scratch upon the skin. In this manner the poison will be infused into the blood, and death will surely follow. Now, as these rings are at present among the rarest things in the world, and as Mr. Gravelly was fond of collecting old relics, I think it extremely likely that he may have had one, and may have used it upon himself."

"No, no. I am sure he did not. I know it."

"No one else here could have done," said Dr. Ellis, positively. "But tell me, do you suspect any one?"

"No one," replied Dr. Landsfield.

He shuddered as he spoke, for there flashed across him the recollection of a strange and antique ring which he had seen upon Julia Gravelly's hand the night her adopted father died.

He said nothing, however, but assisted his friend to replace the body in the coffin and screw down the lid again. After this it was driven back to the village cemetery, and re-interred in the grave from whence they had taken it.

When they returned the day was breaking. After breakfast Dr. Ellis set off for his home.

Dr. Landsfield was sorely perplexed. He knew not what to do.

He knew now that his friend had been poisoned, and he was equally certain that Dr. Ellis was wrong in supposing that Mr. Gravelly had committed suicide.

He was sure, in his own mind, that Julia Gravelly had murdered the old man to prevent the execution of the will, but he had no proof of it. As several days passed away, and he heard nothing of the intended will of Mr. Gravelly from her, or from her lawyer, he became convinced of this.

He determined to test the matter as soon as he could, by obtaining possession of the ring he had noticed on her finger.

To accomplish this he prepared a powerful compound, which, if dextrously used, would enable him to render her insensible, and thus secure the ring.

He had not long to wait, for in less than a week he was called in to see the young woman, who was suddenly taken ill. As he stood by her bedside he saw that the ring was still upon her left hand when he had noticed it at first.

She was even more beautiful than ever, and it seemed so hard to think that so lovely a woman could be guilty of so foul a crime.

But as he felt that his suspicions were not unfounded, he was resolved to test them as far as lay in his power.

Quietly producing the compound that he had brought with him, he arranged it so that she would experience its full effect, and in a few minutes he saw a gentle and dreamy languor steal over her, and in less than ten minutes she was helpless. The effect of the drug would not last long, and he had but little time to carry out his plan.

Drawing the ring from her finger, he moved back the slide, which he quickly discovered, and saw two fine claws of steel lying underneath it, and coated with a dark grey substance. They were, beyond a doubt, the instruments that had made the wound on Mr. Gravelly's hand, and all his suspicions were confirmed.

Only one thing remained, and that was to prove by actual experiment that the ring was poisoned, and capable of producing death. How to do this was a difficult question. Glancing round the room he saw a cat dozing quietly in one corner.

With an exclamation of joy, he sprang to it, and seizing it, gave it a sharp scratch with the claws. Then re-adjusting the ring, he slipped it back on the young woman's hand, and sat down to watch the cat.

In less than half an hour she manifested signs of dizziness, and finally fell to the floor. Her breathing

became more difficult and her frame withered and swelled frightfully, until at last she lay quite still.

After waiting for a few minutes Dr. Landfield examined her, and found that she was dead. Raising the window, he threw the cat out on the lawn, and then turned his attention to bring Julia back to consciousness.

She soon revived, and he left her, and hastened home, carrying with him the cat which he had picked up on his way. A careful examination showed him that she had died from the effects of a poison similar to that which had been fatal to Mr. Gravely.

This was all he wanted. He was determined to have the murderers brought to justice for her crime, and he was equally resolved to charge her with it before causing her arrest.

Perhaps this latter resolution was not very wise, but he wished to carry it out in order to set his mind at rest concerning the affair. Waiting until Julia had fully recovered, he called on her one afternoon.

She met him calmly and with distant politeness. Adroitly turning the conversation to suit his purpose, he said at length:

"I have been thinking of the death of your adopted father, Miss Gravely. I have always doubted that it was caused by apoplexy." She started, and turned ghastly pale, but he affected not to notice this, and went on: "This was my reason for wishing to hold the post-mortem examination to which you objected so strongly. I feel confident that he was not a victim of apoplexy."

"What do you think was the matter with him?" she asked, nervously, and making a visible effort to be calm.

"I think he was poisoned," replied the doctor, quietly.

She sank back in her chair with her face perfectly livid, but the doctor, still affecting to be unconscious of this, continued:

"There are certain mineral poisons that will produce almost every symptom of apoplexy, and as my friend was not subject to the disease, I think he must have fallen a victim to one of these. But let me tell you a singular dream I have had lately, which has influenced me greatly in my belief. I dreamed I had to make the post-mortem examination in spite of you, and that on the night after the burial, I, in company with a brother physician, had the body exhumed, and taken to my home. There we made the examination, and found that poison had caused your adopted father's death. There were strange marks on one of his fingers, which we had reason to suppose were caused by some instrument which had been used in implanting the poison in the system. The body was re-interred, I thought, and I determined to leave nothing undone to find the murderer. I had reason, in my dream, to suspect a certain beautiful woman of this place, and shortly afterwards, as I thought, I was called in to see her during an attack of sickness. By means of a powerful drug I rendered her insensible, and drew from her finger a mysterious ring which I had supposed was the instrument used in causing my friend's death. With it I killed a cat, and then replaced it on her hand, fully satisfied of the correctness of my conclusions. This dream has influenced me so greatly that I have determined to cause the arrest of the party I suspect."

Julia lay back in her cushioned chair, with her eyes closed, and her face the hue of the grave. Her forehead was damp with a painful perspiration, and her breath came heavily and with difficulty.

As the doctor finished speaking, she opened her eyes and gazed at him with an expression that haunted him to his latest hour.

"It is useless for me to contend against you," she said, in a strange, unnatural voice. "It was no dream which you have told me, but a fearful reality. This is the ring, and its powers have not been exaggerated by you. See," and she drew back the slide, and exposed the claws to his view. "They are terrible for good or evil. I used them on him to escape you, and now they are equally powerful to prevent your triumphing over me."

As she spoke she raised her hand, and pressed it against her forehead. With a cry of horror, Dr. Landfield sprang forward, but was too late. The print of the fatal claws was visible upon her brow, and the physician knew of no antidote that could save her.

"What have you done?" he exclaimed, in a trembling voice.

"Baffled you," she replied, and she swept past him to her chamber.

In a few hours the young woman was a corpse. She refused the remedies which the physician offered, although he did not know that they could save her. She was calm and composed until she became insensible, and died in a short time afterwards.

Dr. Landfield was horror-stricken by the terrible tragedy, and as he left the unhappy house that had witnessed it, he looked a dozen years older than when he entered there.

J. D. M. C. J.

ANECDOTE OF NAPOLEON. — Kleber, while in Egypt, became envious and refractory, and disobeyed an order of Napoleon. Bonaparte sent for him. He attended with a haughty bearing, which, joined with his stature, gave him an air of heroism. The Staff—all present at the scene—silently contrasted the heroic height and proud deportment of Kleber with the little person and pale visage of the Commander-in-Chief. Bonaparte at a glance read their thoughts, and changed aspect in an instant. His countenance became animated, his eyes flashed, his voice broke out with extraordinary splendour. "Which of us," said he, addressing Kleber, "is above the other here? You are higher than I am only by a head—one act of disobedience more, and that difference will disappear, *allez*." General Kleber immediately obeyed.

A DAUGHTER TO MARRY.

By the Author of "Butler Burke at Eton," &c.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

In earlier days and calmer hours,
When heart with heart delights to blend,
When bloom my native valley's bowers
I had—ah, have I now!—a friend.

The Glaze.

WHEN Michael Saville found that his father had escaped from his custody he feared to go back to his mother.

Counting his money he discovered that he had enough to carry him to America, and he resolved to go to that country.

He had often wished to travel to that far-distant region and see if his peculiar talents would not be more appreciated there than they were in England by his own countrymen.

So he accordingly took the train to Liverpool and there bought a passage to the United States.

Felicia was very much alarmed when she heard of her father's disappearance from Doctor Masterman Hall's surgery.

There was an air of mystery about the whole affair which she was far from being able to understand.

Her surprise, instead of diminishing, increased during the ensuing day, and she thought of going back to London, where a letter in her father's handwriting arrived.

With trembling hands she tore open the seal, and read the epistle, which began:

"MY DEAREST DAUGHTER,—It is with the deepest regret that I write to tell you I have been consigned to a felon's prison. Do not start—read this letter calmly through and you will see that if I have done wrong I have also made atonement, and in the following remarkable way.

Your father induced me to rob the bank of which I was manager. Do not think that I mention this circumstance out of any cowardly wish to screen myself and throw the blame upon her. It only do so because I wish to put you fully in possession of all the circumstances which have brought me to Newgate.

"I robbed the bank and succeeded in obtaining home without detection, but unhappily, a young man who was employed in the bank had been there on the evening of the robbery, and suspicion fell upon him. He was committed for trial. Rather than let him suffer the penalty of the law, I resolved to give myself up, which I have done.

"Perhaps the repentance which urged me to do so would never have been born had I not heard you reading the Bible one morning as I was going into the city.

"May I beg of you, my dear child—dearer than ever now I am torn from you—to visit me in my confinement; will you also hasten to your mother, who, I am credibly informed, is in a precarious state.

"What can I say in expiation for bringing all this misery upon you? Nothing.

"I will pray—God will hear the prayers of such a man as I am—that He to whom all hearts are open may reward the true virtues which dwell in you.

Yours Own Affectionate Father, MICHAEL SAVILLE."

Felicia only read this letter once. There was no necessity for a repetition of the perusal. Her father was in want of her presence and assistance, and she would not withhold it from him. She would stay as part of the comforter in the hour of need.

On her way to the station she called upon Doctor Masterman, and in a few words made him acquainted with what had happened; whereas the worthy doctor was much astonished.

In half an hour she was flying over the metals to London.

Her first visit was to her father. The solicitor admitted her to his cell, and she threw herself sobbingly on his neck.

"Oh! my dear, dear father," she exclaimed, amidst a shower of tears, "how dreadful it is to see you here. My duty to my mother cannot restrain me from saying that if she were in such a place it would not be nearly so shocking, because her antecedents would have prepared her for such a contingency."

"Hush! my child," replied Mr. Saville, gently, "we must not be censorious. I have incurred my doom, and I must not murmur. My only comforts are having—first of all—saved that noble young fellow, Barclay, from a long imprisonment, and secondly, that I have retained your love."

"You will be taken away from me," said Felicia.

"Alas, yes!"

"I shall not see you, and when I do it will be in a felon's dress. Oh, papa, if you had only been content with a little. What made you so grasping? What pity that you should not have been content with a little!"

"Your mother urged me on."

"She has been your evil genius."

"That is true."

"For a time father and daughter mingled tears together."

Felicia endeavoured to do all in her power to raise her father's spirits and cheer him up under his heavy indictment, none the less heavy because it was well-imposed, and he in his turn assumed a cheerful spirit—which he was far from feeling—in order to re-assure the child of his age—the daughter whom he loved more than all the others.

On leaving her father Felicia continued her dull and dismal round of visits, and went to the inn where her mother lay dangerously ill.

The fever which the doctor had alluded to had made its appearance; and when Felicia arrived her parent was delirious.

Zadok Hoskisson was there, but Felicia did not remember him, though she had seen him in Australia, and he thought it best not to make himself known.

Felicia considered it her duty to nurse her mother, for in spite of all her faults and all her frailty, she was her mother, and she assumed that weighty task.

Zadok, seeing that Mrs. Saville was in good hands, took his leave, and Felicia with the nurse alone remained.

The doctor came several times during the day, but did not think it requisite that he should stay all night; he contented himself with writing prescriptions and leaving directions with the anxious watchers.

The nurse soon discovered that Felicia was a relation, and her experience of sick rooms was sufficient to tell her that relations always watched well. Consequently she thought her services could be dispensed with, and sitting down upon a chair, she allowed herself to go to sleep.

Felicia was not sorry to be rid of her.

Every movement of Mrs. Saville's was closely watched by her, and she prepared to follow the doctor's orders to the letter.

Towards midnight the wind got up, and howled over the house-top and among the chimneys with a strange weird noise.

The windows rattled and the wind forced itself through the chinks of the flooring and inflated the target as if it had been a huge bladder or a balloon.

The candles burnt low, and great black snuffs hung upon them, which Felicia rose to remove when a sound from the bed drew her back.

Her mother was speaking.

But she uttered nothing but the ravings of a delirious mind. Yet there was something in her incoherent talk which interested Felicia strangely.

She bent over her mother so as to catch the hoarse tones which issued from her lips.

"Fenwick! Maurice Fenwick! ha! ha! He is dead! No, no! Not dead, but worse than dead! That was my doing, mine—mine—mine! Ha! ha!"

Here she gave utterance to a demoniac laugh, which startled the old nurse in her arm-chair, and threw out her arms, clutching the empty air wildly with her hands.

"Poor man," she continued, as her mood changed. "Poor man. If I die tell Felicia to go to—yes it was a fine poison—fine—fine—fine. Did he not say there was an antidote? Tell Felicia to go."

She fell back, leaving the sentences uncompleted, and though Felicia bent over her for a full hour expectantly, not a sound issued from her closed lips.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Shake—He hath wrong'd me, Master Page. —*Shal.*—If it be confessed it is not confessed; it is not that so, Master Page? He hath wrong'd me, indeed he hath; believe me, Robert Shallow, require, said he is wrong'd.

Shal.—If it be confessed it is not confessed; it is not that so, Master Page? He hath wrong'd me, indeed he hath; believe me, Robert Shallow, require, said he is wrong'd.

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The nurse, tired, lazy, and indifferent, had suffered herself to fall into a heavy slumber, from which she occasionally awoke with a start and a cough, but sleep had taken so solid a hold over her faculties that she was soon once more in the arms of Morpheus.

No fire burned in the grate, which was ornamented with one of those fantastic masses of paper which are commonly seen in those shoddy where utility takes the place of taste.

Without, save the rolling of a cab, which was heard occasionally, the dull tread of a policeman on his monotonous beat, and the harsh voice of some drunken man who was rolling home after deep potations, all was silent.

Mrs. Saville was restless and uneasy. She appeared to be altogether oblivious of her daughter's presence. Her eyes glared with a tigerish ferocity which was painful to witness. Now and then a change, which was singularly grateful to the solitary and anguished watcher, would come over the convulsed features of her mother, and serenity would usurp the place of passion, while peace took that of tempestuous storm.

Felicia afterwards wondered how she had strength to go through the horrors of that night. Her mind was strangely agitated. She had lost all that she held dear. Her father, whom she had dearly loved, was in a goal, soon to assume the garb of a felon. She would not behold him for years otherwise than in a shameful and degraded position, which was enough to wring the heart of a loving daughter.

Her mother, whom she had at least revered and behaved dutifully to, was stretched upon a bed of sickness, from which she might never rise.

The family was broken down, overwhelmed with infamy, and held up to the openly-expressed contempt of the world.

Her lover, was but the wreck of his former self, and whether it would ever please heaven to restore his intellect, it was impossible for her to predict.

Truly she knew sorrow—assuredly she was bowed down and afflicted. She was going through the furnace, but she was destined to emerge from the fiery ordeal refined and purified.

The wind moaned in fitful gusts without, and hurrying itself in stormy waves of air against the sides of the house, made the casements rattle. All was weird and ghostlike.

As she sat by the bedside wondering if her mother would speak again, Felicia fancied that she saw shadows on the wall, which mocked and gazed at her, taking the form of hideous demons, colossal and gigantic one minute, then sinking to the level of a dwarf, ungainly and elfin.

Suddenly her mother moved and uttered some few incoherent words.

Felicia sprang to her feet in a moment, and as before bent anxiously over the flushed face of the unconscious woman.

"There! there!" cried Mrs. Saville. "Do you not all see him? Would to heaven you could see him as I do, and behold him with my eyes, which seem to be on fire at the sight! He sits upon the ground in a solitary chamber, turning his thumbs round one another and counting his fingers, with the sickly smile of hopeless idleness upon his face. Mark him well! How pallid his features, and how expressionless his face! His noble fire is quenched. And this is my work. Ha! ha! Who amongst you will say that I have not earned my title to the name of demon? If admission to your ranks be by works rather than by faith then am I one of ye. My work! Yes, yes. No one will dispute that!"

She paused.

It was evident that she fancied herself in communication with some ghostly beings to whom she was relating her exploits in crime. It was a ghastly revelation, and one to which Felicia listened with undisguised horror.

"That is not all, my friends—for you, will be my friends when I come amongst you, as I must surely do, having forfeited my title to a higher estate," Mrs. Saville resumed. "Alas! No, I would it were; and yet I know not. It is something to be audacious, even in crime. 'Twas I who made my husband rob the bank—a plan which was well conceived had he held his tongue. But these are nothing to the wilfulness of Fenwick's."

Here there was another pause, which Felicia, in her excitement, broke, exclaiming:

"What of him?"

Mrs. Saville, still thinking, owing to the disordered state of her brain, that she was in conversation with beings of another world, replied:

"You ask me what of him. Listen to the tale. 'Tis worth your while for seldom has so great villainy been so successful. He loved my daughter, did this low-bred fellow—this chemist's son—and to punish his presumption I thought I would make him an idiot for life. Ha! ha! You laugh. Well, I must perform laugh too, though my poor brain aches rackingly. Ha! ha!"

Felicia's answer:

"I went to a friend of mine, who gave me a drug—oh! a rare drug!—and when Fenwick came to the ball I gave him all—every grain. Ha! ha! 'Twas well conceived and better executed!"

"Tell me the name of the man you went to," said Felicia, in a tremulous voice, which she was unable to control.

"His name? What was his name? How my poor head swims! What can have come to my memory? What was his name? How strange I cannot call it to mind! I shall be forgetting my own name next!"

For fully five minutes Mrs. Saville appeared to be engaged in the futile endeavour to collect her thoughts.

At length she exclaimed, with a wild burst of confidence:

"Listen, all of you—listen! I must not speak above a whisper, for there are those who would be glad to hear his name, which I have remembered at last."

"Why would they be glad to know it?" asked Felicia, with an awful anxiety.

Mrs. Saville lowered her voice to its smallest compass, and replied, in a slight whisper:

"Because there is an antidote, and they might go and get it from him."

"From whom?"

"Alphonse—"

"Yes."

"Alphonse—Oh, my poor head! What is his patronymic? Oh! oh! How these shooting pains fly through me! They are like daggers!"

"You said Alphonse?"

"Ah, yes! Alphonse Pastille!"

Felicia offered up a fervent and hurried prayer to heaven in gratitude for this great favour vouchsafed.

She felt positive that nothing would have induced her mother when in her senses to have divulged this invaluable and dearly cherished secret.

"Where did you say he lived?" she inquired.

"Lived!" repeated Mrs. Saville, as if she did not fully understand the import of the question.

"Yes—what is his address?"

Mrs. Saville shook her head, and made no answer.

It was clear that her faculties were deserting her, and that she was incapable of pursuing that train of thought any further.

Felicia was unable to extract another word from her.

She had, however, the inestimable consolation of having discovered that Maurice Fenwick's intellect had been tampered with, that he was the victim of a skillfully concocted drug, and that Mrs. Saville had been mainly instrumental in administering the drug to him. In addition to that, she knew that the person who made the drug was called Alphonse Pastille, and that there was an antidote.

This was indeed glorious news—a magnificent revelation which was of the greatest value.

She fondly hoped that it might and in Maurice Fenwick's being restored to sanity and his friends.

Finding that her mother was not disposed to be communicative, Felicia abandoned the attempt to make her speak, though she would have given much to know the address of Alphonse Pastille, which she did not despair of discovering by other means.

At about three o'clock in the morning, Mrs. Saville evidenced symptoms of the wildest excitement. She sprang from the bed and paced the room anxiously.

Felicia endeavoured to soothe her, but in vain. She appeared to be unconscious of her presence.

Thinking that if allowed her own way she would be calmer when the paroxysm wore off, Felicia contented herself with waking the nurse, and watching her mother at a distance.

"Lor, miss," said the nurse, rubbing her eyes sleepily, "she's stark, staring mad! I've seen them that way often and often."

"I am inclined to think it the result of delirium," said Felicia.

"Not it, miss; it ain't no delirium—not a bit of it. She's taken leave of her senses. Let me ring the bell for the chambermaid. 'Our lives are at stake!'"

"Don't talk such nonsense, nurse," replied Felicia. "I am sure I shall not have the house disturbed at this time of night for nothing at all. When she has worn herself out she will, I have no doubt, go to sleep gently."

"Well, miss, you're to command and it's for me to obey. I've had too much experience along of lunatics."

Mrs. Saville's paroxysm showed no symptoms of abating.

She continued to pace the room, muttering rapidly, talking to herself, the words being incoherent and jerky phrases.

After a short time she went to a chair upon which her clothes were lying, and proceeded to dress in haste.

It was now that Felicia ought to have interfered, for it was evident the unhappy lady was not in any way mistress of her own actions, but by the exercise of mistaken kindness Felicia omitted to do so, and Mrs. Saville dressed herself without any interruption.

The nurse was horrified at Felicia's apathy, which in her eyes was simply criminal. She held up her hands, and trusted that no evil might result from so foolish a course of action.

When Mrs. Saville had attired herself, to her satisfaction she attempted to leave the room, but the nurse, unknown to Felicia, had locked the door and taken the key away.

Finding herself baffled she threw herself into a transport of rage, which gave way to fear.

She imagined that the fiends with whom she supposed herself to have been conversing had condemned her out of her own mouth, and were coming forward for the purpose of torturing her.

This horrible idea gained ground in her mind every moment, and she evidenced all the symptoms of mortal terror.

"Ring the bell, miss—do ring it!" cried the nurse, quaking with fright. "When they gets into their tantrums like they're a-wid, do, for heaven's sake, ring the bell and rouse the house, or there's no telling what the consequences will be!—If you have no regard for your own life you might have a little for mine."

Thus urged Felicia did not see how she could reasonably refuse compliance with so modest a request. Going to the bell-rope she rang it violently, and the noise of the ring resounded throughout the corridor.

Mrs. Saville heard it, and was strangely disturbed.

"They come! they come!" she cried, stretching out her arms as if to ward off some imaginary assailants. "Oh, they come! They come!"

She repeated these words monotonously, and then her mood changed.

She became as furious as a caged lioness, and thrust herself against the door, hoping to open it. Her frantic efforts proved unavailing.

Felicia went up to her mother and by the use of gentle phrases endeavoured to soothe her, but was unable to do so.

Mrs. Saville gave her a violent push, which made her reel up against the wall.

The nurse retreated in terror.

The madwoman—for she was no better—seeing her exit by the door effectually prevented, rushed to the window.

It was bolted.

With trembling hands she undid the chain and forced it back. Another effort threw the sash up.

The wall descended to the street perpendicularly for a length of five-and-thirty feet.

Mrs. Saville stood upon the dressing-table, knocking the glass on one side with a contemptuous gesture.

"Oh, save her! save her!" cried Felicia, bound to the spot by a mortal terror.

The nurse was incapable of motion.

A loud knocking was heard at the door. The energetic ringing had aroused the servants of the hotel. They wished to obtain admittance, and wondered why it was denied them.

Mrs. Saville craned her neck, and bending forward, peered into the street below. She drew back with an involuntary tremor.

"Save her! Save her! For the love of heaven save her!" Felicia continued to cry in the accents of despair.

The knocking at the door redoubled in intensity.

Mrs. Saville took the noise to be an indication of the approach of the ministers of the fiend whom she dreaded so much.

Such was the awful length to which a guilty conscience was brought by its own internal fears.

While the door resisted the attacks of its assailants Mrs. Saville hesitated, but when a violent blow forced it from its hinges and sent it flying into the room, admitting a motley group of men and women variously attired, she uttered a scream—a death cry—call it what you will—which rang in the ears of those who heard it for many a long year afterwards.

Then she bent forward and plunged into the water, as she might have plunged into thirty feet of water.

As she disappeared the spell which bound Felicia to the floor was broken. She ran to the window and was just in time to see her mother fall with a dull thud upon the stones, with which the street was paved.

Then she fell back in a swoon.

Mrs. Saville was picked up with her head fractured and never spoke more.

Such was the end of a designing and wicked woman.

(To be continued.)

FOREIGN LETTERS.—The altered scale of weight recently applied to letters sent within the United Kingdom, advancing by one rate for each half-ounce throughout, will be extended to letters for the undermentioned foreign countries—viz.:—The States of Germany, including Prussia, Austria (when not addressed *via* France), Saxony, Hanover, Brunswick, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Oldenburg, Hamburg, Bremen, Lubeck. Places in the postal district of Tour and Taxis—viz., Frankfort-on-the-Maine, Grand Duchy of Hesse, Hesse (Electoral), Hesse-Homburg, Schaumburg-Lippe, Lippe-Deimold, Hesse-Reuss, Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, Saxe-Meiningen, Saxe-Weimar-Eisenach, Hohenzollern, Schwartzburg-Rudolstadt, and Schwartzburg-Sonderhausen. Bavaria, Wurttemberg, Baden, Luxemburg (when specially addressed *via* Belgium). The United States of America, the Republic of Uruguay, the Argentine Confederation, Brazil (by British packet), Borneo, Java, Madagascar, and the Sandwich Islands. Under this regulation a letter for any of the places mentioned, if weighing more than one ounce, but not exceeding one ounce and a half, is chargeable with only three rates of postage instead of four, as hitherto; and, if exceeding two ounces, but not exceeding two ounces and a half, with only five rates of postage, and so on.

THE BACHELOR'S BRIDE.

"Oh, here is a letter from Cousin Lynn," said *petite* Annie Hall, as she stood in her father's library looking over the bundle of letters the servant had just brought in from the village post-office.

"Annie Hall!" repeated she, somewhat slowly, as she re-read the superscription. "I wonder what my dignified cousin has found to lecture upon now?"

Saying which she seated herself upon a little ottoman in the corner and began to read.

"Most ready for our walk, Annie?" inquired a pale, black-haired girl, who entered the room a few moments after.

"Oh, Mabel," said she, springing up from her seat lightly, "Cousin Lynn is coming here the last of next month to spend five or six weeks with us. I am so glad!"

And the little maiden frisked about the room like a frolicsome kitten.

"And who is Cousin Lynn?" asked Mabel.

"Oh, I forgot you had never seen him," said Annie, slightly blushing. "Well, he is my mother's favourite nephew, as his mother, when living, was her only sister. But Aunt Wellington has been dead a great many years now, for I cannot remember her in the least," continued she, musingly.

"I wonder if he isn't Annie's favourite cousin too?" suggested Mabel, archly.

"Well, I do like him very much for a cousin, to be sure, Mabel," returned Annie, gaily; "but then he is a great deal older than either of us, and twice as dignified as I am."

And the little witch folded her arms, as though she had a grain of dignity in her disposition when she chose to show it.

"How much older?" inquired Mabel.

"Fifteen or sixteen years at least," said Annie; "but then one would not think he was more than twenty-five or twenty-six, if they didn't know his age, I am sure."

"Is he handsome?" asked Mabel, smilingly.

"Very," responded Annie, while her brown eyes sought the carpet rather than her companion's face after she had finished speaking.

"What is the matter, Mabel? You look as serious as though you were about to lose every friend in the world—except my own rattle-brained self," she added, mischievously.

"I was not aware that my countenance betrayed my thoughts," returned Mabel, half earnestly; "but the fact is, Annie, I think I had better betake myself all home before this paragon of a cousin makes his appearance here."

"Go home, and so soon, when your good mother promised me I should have you as long as I liked, even if it were all summer," said Annie, at the same time raising both hands and opening her little mouth in mock astonishment. "Most eccentric lady mine," she continued, "please tell me what my cousin Lynn, who never injured a mouse even in his life, is going to frighten you away for?"

"I did not say he would frighten me away, did I?" asked Mabel, half sadly, despite the comical attitude of Annie, who had sunk on her knees before her during the last half of the sentence.

"What else, of course, could he do if you march off without even seeing him? Why, Mabel, you will be charmed with each other, positively mesmerized, the first moment your eyes meet," said Annie, mischievously.

"I don't like dignified, handsome gentlemen," re-

turned Mabel, laughing. "I can never act myself in their presence, especially when they have such a passionate love for the beautiful as you say your Cousin Lynn has."

"I said he liked pretty faces, and I call yours pretty, notwithstanding you so obstinately assert to the contrary; and I know Cousin Lynn will think it pretty too, for it was only the last time he was here that I heard him say, as he was gazing at that picture at the back of you, that it had the most beautiful eyes he ever saw; and yours are exactly like those both in colour and expression. I remember it perfectly well," said Annie, gaily, "for I ran right to the glass to see if mine were anything like them."

"Well, what was your decision?" asked Mabel, laughing in spite of herself.

"I did not come to any," returned the lively Annie, "for it would have taken a great deal of time to have done so satisfactorily, you know, and before I had stood there five minutes Cousin Lynn called me away, saying I was the vainest creature he ever saw. 'Like all women, though,' he added, apologetically, a moment afterwards, seeing I was inclined to be a little sulky at his first assertion."

"Well, if I must meet this piece of cousinly dignity and criticism, why I will endeavour to keep as quietly obscure as possible, so as to escape his notice. But come, now, let us prepare for our visit to old Aunt Reed," said Mabel.

And locking her arm within Annie's, the two girls left the room together.

"Aunt Reed," as she was called by the whole neighbourhood, was an old lady who lived at about a mile's distance from Mr. Hall's, and who, not only being nearly blind, but afflicted with rheumatism the greater part of the cold season, was unable to support herself by her own exertions, but who never suffered for want of attention, especially when Mabel Gray became Annie's guest, as she had been at intervals for the past two or three years, and as Annie said she should continue to be as long as she lived.

Mrs. Gray, Mabel's mother, and Mrs. Hall had in their girlhood been most intimate friends, and when both of them married at about the same time, Mr. Gray had settled down at some fifty miles distance from the town in which Mr. Hall resided.

Then for the first time their two daughters met, and happily formed an attachment for each other, seemingly as pleasant as their parents' had been; and although Mabel had since then occasionally passed a week at her friend's house, yet until the present time she had never been able to pass a much longer period with her.

But now, as Annie had said, her mother had yielded to the earnest wishes of Mrs. Hall and her daughter, and playfully promised the latter, when pleading for Mabel's society, that she might if she liked keep her all summer.

And never were maidens happier when together than Mabel Gray and Annie Hall, and yet two friends could seldom be found more unlike each other in disposition and demeanour.

The former was, as we have said, two years Annie's senior, and possessed of a quiet and affectionate nature, which, while it yielded much love to every one near her, was extremely sensitive to the slightest shade of reproach or forgetfulness. She was not beautiful, not even pretty, but there was a soft, sweet expression in her large hazel eyes, and about her well-formed mouth, which often attracted a stranger's observation, and invariably satisfied her friends that she could not be more pleasing to them if she were ever so beautiful.

Mabel, however, with a mind high toned and keenly cultivated, was upon this point mortally sensitive. She knew that she was plain, and yet her spirit fairly worshipped at the shrine of the beautiful; but while it gushed out in reverent admiration towards everything pure and lovely it fettered her own actions, and rendered her timidly shy before those who were not her familiar friends.

But Annie, the gay-hearted, beautiful Annie, was her father's pet, her mother's, Mabel's, and indeed, the whole neighbourhood's.

No one ever looked upon her golden, sunshiny hair, or into her merry, happy brown eyes without wondering why it made them so happy to be near them.

Well, as we said before, Aunt Reed never suffered for little comforts, or company even, when Mabel was with Annie, for it was their custom to visit her each morning when the weather would permit, taking with them occasionally their sewing, for the old lady had a gift for story telling which when employed oftener detained them in the little cottage until noonday than otherwise.

About a fortnight had passed away since Annie had received her cousin's letter, when she and Mabel were returning one afternoon from a long ramble they had been taking in the woods belonging to Mr. Hall, and not far from the house.

They had almost reached the latter when Annie

suddenly withdrew her arm from Mabel's, and standing still for a moment, pointed towards the garden.

Then hurrying forward she reached its gate, and before Mabel could inquire why she made such haste, was shaking hands very cordially with a gentleman whom she speedily intimated to be none other than Cousin Lynn.

"Well," said the latter, as they entered the house together, "I have come somewhat earlier than I wrote you; are you glad or sorry?"

"Sorry, of course, Mr. Wellington," replied the laughing Annie. "Why did you not write the exact hour we might expect you, so we need not have had such a terrible surprise?"

"Oh, woman, in our hours of ease, uncertain, coy, and hard to please, and—"

"There, that will do, sir; you know I never could bear those lines."

"Well, if you and Miss Gray think best, I will return home and send you a more definite notice of my coming, thereby preventing a second terrible surprise," said Cousin Lynn smilingly.

"I suppose as you are here you might as well remain," replied Annie. "Besides, Mabel and I have been wishing for some one to escort us over the country during our horseback rides and rambles, and perhaps you would be willing to make yourself useful in that capacity occasionally."

"Do not doubt me," he said, and as he spoke he bent his dark eyes upon Annie with an expression of admiration, which caused her cheeks to glow deeper until they looked like her garden roses."

The days fitted by like the summer shadows; and although Cousin Lynn's six weeks had extended themselves into eight, he still kept deferring his departure.

Never had he enjoyed a visit to his Uncle Hall's so much before; for although Annie had always been the same lively, joyous creature as now, yet he had rather considered her as a petted plaything than otherwise, or a bright little fairy, who looked very beautiful in the sunshine, but would be sure to grow pale and helpless in the shade.

But Mabel—whom he had thought at first so plain when standing beside his pretty cousin—quiet and womanly—dignified, as she was, had with each passing day appeared more charming, until—yes, he was obliged to admit the fact—he, Lynn Wellington, had begun to doubt whether a bachelor's life was really the happiest to live "while here below."

"Books! books! I have heard nothing but reviews of, and quotations from 'favourite authors' for these two weeks past," said Annie one morning, when she had found Cousin Lynn and Mabel in her father's library, discussing the merits of a new work lying upon the table. "Do you not want to study a little while by yourself, papa?" inquired she roguishly of her parent, as he sat reading by the window.

Papa smiled, and called his daughter an unmerciful little thing; while Mabel laughingly inquired if she were most ready to pay their accustomed visit to old Aunt Reed.

But Annie pleaded indisposition, and begged Mabel to leave her at home "just this time," adding, however, that "Cousin Lynn would of course supply her place, as it was too lonesome a walk for her friend to enjoy alone."

"Aunt Reed must have proved very attractive this morning," said Annie archly to her cousin, when, two or three hours later, she met them at the gate as they were returning from their walk.

"Very," returned he, smiling, as he followed her into the house.

The next morning Cousin Lynn announced the necessity of an immediate termination to his visit, and accordingly bade them farewell. Every one seemed surprised, except Mabel, who, although she looked a shade paler than usual, manifested no regret at his sudden departure.

We have only to add, dear reader, that the next summer, when Cousin Lynn visited again at Mr. Hall's, and little Annie, gay-hearted as of old, repeated to him the conversation which had occurred between Mabel and herself when his first letter was received, he wondered how he could ever have thought his pretty cousin more fascinating than sweet Mabel, who was now his happy bride.

M. S.

THE QUEEN OF THE GIPSIES.—Queen Esther, accompanied by the Princess Helen, arrived in Harwick on Thursday week. She took apartments in the Tower Hotel, where she held a *levee*, which was largely visited by the clergy and gentry of the town and neighbourhood. About mid-day she visited the museum and exhibition, and was accompanied thither by a great crowd, who evinced great anxiety to get a glimpse of her Majesty. The street from the museum to the market place was densely crowded by multitudes of both sexes, who opened up a pathway for the royal party, who were received by loud hurrahs and wavings of hats and handkerchiefs.



[THE WESTMINSTER DIAMONDS.]

PRECIOUS STONES.

INHERENT to human nature seems to be the passion for gems, "rich and rare" as those worn by glorious Tom Moore's heroine who could traverse the land without the least alarm from the sons of Erin, knowing that although they loved "gold and jewels in store, they loved honour and virtue more." Alas, that we should have to record otherwise of the sons of all other lands, for from all antiquity, jewels, like women, have many a time and oft greatly influenced the fates of men and kingdoms.

In such estimation was the diamond held by the ancients that their poets said they supplied the place of stars, and in the Talmud it is said that Noah had no other light in the ark than that furnished by precious stones. Indeed this gem was held by the Jews as an emblem of the highest perfection, even as that, and other gems have been by other people; a Mexican mother praising her daughter, says: "And thy father has polished and rendered thee brilliant, even as a precious emerald (the gem of Mexico), that thou mayest appear before the eye of the world as a jewel of perfect virtue."

Deeply rooted indeed must have been the love and admiration of gems to have given rise to the superstitions once so common among the Jews and the people of the Middle Ages. The jewel worn on the epoch of Ahas, would, when a man was charged with crime, become either dark or dim, or sparkle with increased lustre, as the accused was innocent or guilty. In the Middle Ages drinking goblets were frequently decorated with gems, in the belief that they would prevent poisoning, a very common crime in those days; most marvellous, however, the diamond was supposed to possess the faculty of multiplying its species. Nay, one Boetius de Root, quoting from another learned man, relates that a lady of good

family had two hereditary diamonds, which produced several others, and thus left a posterity. The learned writer omits, however, to inform us whether the infant diamonds were born small and so grew to maturity. We quote these superstitions merely to show that in all ages diamonds have not been solely esteemed for their monetary value. Of the superstition of our own ancestors respecting jewels an example may be found in Bulwer's admirable "Last of the Barons," wherein a poor man, who having ruined himself by the invention of a steam engine prays hourly for money sufficient to buy the one jewel which, in his belief, to set the machinery in motion.

As in Asia our first parents were created, so in that quarter of the world were gems first discovered, and the love for them developed. No Hebrew lady was without her rings, bracelets, and other "linking ornaments." On the same authority (the New Testament) we find that the Phœnician, or Tyrian lords, were famous by the wearing of such precious stones as the sardias, topaz, diamond, beryl, onyx, jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle. In Sparta, stern Sparta alone, do we find that the wearing of jewels was only permitted to ladies of what is now termed the *demi-monde*. Immense was the gold and jewels looted by the armies of Alexander the Great, especially that from the chiefs of Darius, the Persian monarch, whom history tells us, wore collars of gold and dresses of cloth of gold, with jackets, the sleeves of which were covered with precious stones, to say nothing of their richly jewelled pikes, chariots, swords, daggers, and head gear. The victors of Arbela must have been almost as fortunate as the conquerors of the Mexicans and Peruvians. The Persians, however, had themselves grown rich in gems by the pillaging of the Temple of Solomon. Among the Mexicans and the Peruvians, as among the Jews, the emerald was a sacred stone; curiously enough, the stone set in the

seals of the pontiffs of both was the emerald, also in the large ring worn on the first finger of the right hand was an emerald. Both nations again offered costly jewels to their deities, and buried gems with their dead. When at the funeral of Lord Palmerston his relative, Mr. Sullivan, threw some jewels into the grave, some surprise was excited in the minds of those, and those only, who were ignorant that it was an old Irish custom.

Among the Romans the fondness for gems was a passion. The Senator Nonius suffered proscription rather than cede his *opal*, valued at £16,800, to Augustus, and among the gifts of Julius Cæsar to the mother of Marcus Brutus was one pearl valued at £18,417.

The French nobility of the time of Louis XV., were scarcely less extravagantly luxurious, for they pulverized diamonds to prove their insane magnificence. In England a similar wanton waste has happened. Sir Thomas Gresham, the founder of the Royal Exchange, at an entertainment he gave to the Spanish Ambassador, dissolved a pearl, for which he had been offered £15,000, in a glass of wine, and quaffed the liquid to the health of Queen Elizabeth.

The latter sovereign, too, miserly as she was, was not indifferent to gems, nor sufficiently honourable either to reject the opportunity of obtaining the jewels of Mary Queen of Scots by underhand means. In the next reign the nobles were singularly lavish of their diamonds; Buckingham's court suit was estimated at £80,000, and the Duke, like Raleigh and others, wore the smaller stones so loosely attached to his garments that the gems would fall from them. A similar story has been told of the late Prince Esterhazy, when ambassador from Austria at the Court of St. James's. This, however, is most probably a mere *canard*, although the prince was marvellously rich in jewels. More careful was James I.'s son-in-law, the Prince Palatine. This prince, escaping to Holland after the loss of his sovereignty, carried with him gems to the value of one million sterling—a marvellous exemplification truly of the intrinsic and portable value of rare gems.

The princes most celebrated in the Middle Ages for their vast wealth in jewels were the Dukes of Orleans and Charles the Bold of Burgundy. The mania of the first prince was, on every New Year's Day, to give away to his friends and relations jewels to an extravagant amount, and to any newly-appointed bishop a piece of costly plate. Charles the Bold, and his son and successor, were not only the possessors of the most costly gems then known, but of those most rare; moreover, those princes were the patrons of the jeweller's art, and caused to be produced settings and designs so cunningly wrought that they remain models to the present day.

From the days of Francis I. to those of Louis XVIII., jewels set in pearls were the fashion, but Marie Theresa, mother of the unfortunate Marie Antoinette, set the fashion for diamonds. Since then this princely gem has held the sway, and many might be the romances that could be written about them. Most famous, perhaps, is that necklace which, through the infamous Count De la Motte and his wife, brought the Queen and the Prince Cardinal of Rohan to so much grief and scandal, and even whetted the vengeance of the human blood-bonds of the great revolution. This, the historic "Diamond-Necklace" was valued at £72,000.

The history of the diamond, indeed from the first that was brought by Europeans from the Asiatic kingdoms of Golconda and Visapoor, is full of interest, as we have said before, more than tinged with romance. The Koh-i-noor, whose pedigree is traced for three thousand and one years, carries with it the story of the rise and downfall of the sovereigns in whose possession it has been (the very fact of possessing it caused the ruin of one sovereign) as well as a portion of the exploits in India of the English, in whose keeping it now is, and is likely to remain.

The largest diamond in the world is in the possession of the Rajah of Mattan. This prince has been offered a vast sum for it, but refused, as he attaches to it the marvellous power of curing all kinds of diseases by means of the water in which it is steeped, and moreover believes the fortune of his family is connected with it. The next is the Orloff, or grand Russian, supposed to have belonged to the Great Mogul, and carries with it the story of the conquest of India by Nadar Shah. It was purchased by Count Orloff for the Empress Catherine, for four hundred and fifty thousand roubles, ready money, and a grant of Russian nobility. It is about the size of a pigeon's egg. Next is the Austrian diamond, valued at £155,682. Next, the Regent or Pitt diamond (supposed to be, although not the largest, the most beautiful in the world). This gem was stolen from the mines of Golconda, and sold to the grandfather of the great William Pitt, who, after having offered it to several sovereigns, sold it to the Regent Duke of Orleans for £92,000, reserving the fragments taken off in the cutting, and which made

several fine diamonds worth several thousand pounds sterling. Mr. Pitt, it is said, gave for it £20,000, thus he netted a handsome fortune. This gem, which during the revolution nearly fell into the hands of the mob, and was afterwards pawned by Napoleon I., is now set in the Imperial crown of France; the first Napoleon wore it mounted in the hilt of his state sword. Next is the King of Portugal's Star of the South, brought from Brazil, and of the estimated value of three millions sterling. Next is the Shah of Persia, valued at 220,000 francs, the chief interest attached to it being that on it there is engraved the names of three of its original owners. Next is the "Sancy," once the property of Charles the Bold, and afterwards of several other sovereigns, but now one of the crown jewels of France, its value being one million of francs. Next the "Nassak Diamond," taken at the conquest of the Deccan by the Marquis of Hastings, and valued at £7,000,200. Next the "Pigott Diamond," the property of the Pacha of Egypt, valued at £30,000. The famous triangular blue diamond, valued at three millions of francs, was one of the crown jewels of France, but it was stolen and has never since been heard of. Of crown jewels, it is said that those in the Imperial crown of Brazil are, beyond doubt, the most splendid of any royal possessions in the world.

So far we have only written of gems in general, and historic, or crown jewels in particular. Scattered, however, through the noble and princely families of Europe are many rare and costly jewels, as the exhibitions of 1851 and 1882 testified by bringing so many of them together—to wit, the blue diamond of Mr. Hope, which weighs 177 grains, and unites the most exquisite hue of the sapphire with the prismatic fire and color of the diamond. At the same time a Mr. Myer exhibited a coal-black diamond, which weighed 366 carats, and is so hard that it resists every attempt to polish it. Another curiosity is the green diamond which forms the button to the King of Saxony's state hat. But of gems and diamonds in particular, and their histories we might continue *ad infinitum*, for where is the noble family which does not boast its heirloom of family diamonds. There is not a "Drawing-room," but what we get a mental glimpse of them from the Court jeweller. During the Regency of George IV., perhaps even later, how common it was for certain great ladies, given perhaps a little too much to high play, to appear at Court and in the salons with cunningly wrought gems of paste, which did service for the family diamonds which, for the nonce, were frequently, like the jewels of our old king and princes, in pledge.

To conclude, although in this, our Victorian age, nobles and courtiers do not, from a love of barbaric pomp and swagger, set diamonds in the throne-room as porcupines cast their quills, nor affectively with a wanton disregard of money, dissolve in their cups pearls of price, we question whether the Cavendishes of Devonshire, the Howards of Norfolk, the Stanleys of Derby, the Scotts of Baselburgh, the Russells of Bedford, and the Grosvenors of Westminster, could not, did they so will, by far outshine their ancestors or predecessors in display of wealth and taste. They are now, thanks to the advanced education of the masses, and of themselves also, the patrons of the arts and sciences, and for specimens of the jeweller's art and cunning, where could one better search than among the collections in our great mansions. An instance of this is the chaste and magnificent necklace, a close representation of which we have given above. This exquisite specimen of the jeweller's skill is formed of a set of diamonds of the purest water, cleavest and setting being *en suite*. The diamonds were believed to be heirlooms of the ancient house of Grosvenor (family jewels), the centre or largest being of historic interest. In their present form they were set by Messrs. Hunt and Roskill for the Marchioness of Westminster.

DURING the present year, up to the end of February, 28 fatal cases of street accidents have been returned to the metropolitan police, and 231 cases of injury. In the city police district 14 persons were run over and killed last year, and 207 were maimed or injured. Three were killed this year, and 89 injured.

A LABOUR TEST.—No arrangement would seem more equitable than subjecting a skilled smith, for instance, to a short trial before permanently engaging him, so to the amount of work he can turn out within a given time. Such a plan is, indeed, when systematically carried out, a very ingenious means of eliminating inferior workmen from any given workshop, and it is only a wonder that it has not been generally carried out. On reflection, however, it will be seen that this mode strikes at the very root of the main objects sought to be attained by the Trades' Unions, who wish to put the good and bad workman, after having once served the legitimate apprenticeship, on the same level as to wages. Accordingly, a few days ago, in one of the largest locomotive works near Manchester, there having been a foreman

pointed who had elsewhere made himself obnoxious to the Amalgamated Engineers' Union by this course, all the smiths struck work and left the shops the very instant the new official came in at the door. When we say that this occurred at Messrs. Beyer, Peacock, and Co.'s establishment, we need not add that the employers of these men are well known for a uniformly just and liberal treatment of their servants.

BRITOMARTE, THE MAN-HATER.

By E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,
Author of "Self-Made," "All Alone," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XLIX.

And is the old flag flying still,
That over our fathers flew,
What bands of white and rosy light,
And dells of starry blue?
Ay—look aloft! its folds full oft
Have braved the roaring blast,
And still they fly when from the sky
This black specter is past.

O. W. Holmes.

THE next day was a busy one to our islanders. Justin was engaged in packing up and sending off stores of fresh provisions to the ship. And the jolly-boat plied all day long between the ship and shore to transport them.

Britomarte and Judith were employed in packing such clothing, books and household effects as they meant to take with them from the island.

It had been determined in solemn consultation between the three that some of the household furniture, and even some of the provisions—much as would be likely to keep a length of time—should be left on the island, in case any other ship should be wrecked upon its rocks, or any other passengers cast away upon its desolate shores.

In the field they turned loose a few sheep, pigs, and fowls.

They would have left Crammie the cow, too, but that Judith raised such a howl as never had been heard from her before, not even on the occasion of the shipwreck; and vowed that to leave Crammie behind would break her heart entirely.

To comfort Judith, and above all, to stop her desecrating howls, Britomarte promised that Crammie should go.

And Britomarte's promise was her bond; moreover, her word was law.

Besides, the table-loving captain of the ship was not averse to having milk and cream for his coffee or tea.

But Crammie was not to go until the ship was ready to sail.

Justin also decided to take his little friend, the curly white dog.

And Britomarte would have taken her pets, the cat and kittens, or at least some of them, but Judith set up another howl more terrifying than the first, and declared that she would never trust herself on board a ship with a cat again, so long as she lived, to suffer shipwreck another time.

So the cat and kittens were fated to be left to grow wild upon the island; and to change perhaps, under the influence of the climate, in the course of time, to a species of small tiger.

The day that our islanders spent in consulting, deciding and packing, the officers of the *Xyphias* passed in preparing for the worst, to be held on board the ship, in honour of the new acquaintances and in return for their hospitality.

And on the second day our islanders were invited to partake of it.

They went early fared sumptuously, passed a very pleasant day and returned late at night to their island home.

The remaining days of the week were spent in repairing the injuries of the ship and transporting the stores from the island.

The captain of the *Xyphias* thought she would be ready to sail on the following Monday.

When Justin heard this, he invited the captain and his officers to come and spend with them Sunday—the last Sunday and the last day on the island—at his house, to hold divine service there.

And early on Sunday morning, the parlour, now dismantled of half of its furniture, was converted into a temporary chapel, and hymns were sung and prayers said and sermons preached, both in the morning and in the afternoon.

The communion in the morning was presided by the ship's chaplain; and in the afternoon by Mr. Rosenthal; the officers and the crew attended both services; and the captain of the *Xyphias* was comfortably in his seat through both sermons; but at the end he said for him—that he would not have slept, nor even winked, during the night, though it had lasted day and night.

When the divine service was over, the captain

some of the officers returned to the ship; but the captain and others remained and spent the evening, and only left at a late hour.

Wind and tide favouring, they were to sail early in the morning.

The jolly-boat was to be at the landing by sunrise to take the last load of our friends' effects to the ship. It was then to return for Justin, Britomarte, Judith, Crammie, and the little dog.

Ah! what a night of mingled sadness and rejoicing was that last one which they spent up on this Desert Island.

Neither of them had imagined how much they had become attached to the place until they realized that they were about to leave it for ever!

Late as it was when their guests left them, they did not retire to bed but set out to visit and take leave of the spots most familiar to them.

They climbed first to the mountain top, to take a last look at the whole island.

The purple sky was clear as crystal, and the large brilliant stars made the scene as bright as the moonlight of other climes.

From their lofty stand-point they overlooked the whole dark, fresh, dewy landscape, as it lay quietly upon the bosom of the heaving sea, beneath the purple starry sky.

Justin lifted his hat and stood bareheaded, grave and still.

Britomarte was silent, but her tears were falling fast.

Judith howled and lifted up her voice in lamentation.

"Sure I said it! Sure I know it! Sure I felt it in all my bones, so I did! That as soon as we got decently to house-keeping, and got used to this place itself, and to love it, we should be torn away, from it. Oh, how shall I never see the beautiful place again! Nor sit under the lovely palm trees that sheltered me from the hot sun like the best ivy umbrellas! Nor ate the water-ripe, cooey nuts that melted like crame-chase in my mouth! Ow-oo! Och-bone! the day! Oh, my jewel iv an island! Oh, me darlint iv an island! Oh, me little angel iv an island! Shall meself never see your swate face again! Ow-oo! Ow-oo!"

And Judith dropped down upon the ground, threw her apron over her head, awayed her body backwards and forwards, and bayed the moon, or rather the stars, as there happened to be no moon visible.

Justin and Britomarte let her howl a long time, and indeed until it was time for them to descend the mountain, and then Justin interfered.

"Come, Judith, be reasonable, my good girl! We all feel a little sad at the thought of leaving the place that has kindly sheltered us so long! But, upon the whole, we are all glad to go, and should be thankful for the opportunity," he said.

"Faix you may be glad, but a devil a bit am I. Sure me heart's broke entirely wid the thought iv leavin' the beautiful place. Oh me jewel of an island! Oh, me darlint iv an island! Ow-oo; me little angel iv an island!" howled the girl.

"Oh, Judith, Judith, how can you go on so? Are you crazy? Remember, Judith, how often you have abused the place; calling it 'a baste iv an island,' 'a hyphen iv an island,' and 'a little devil iv an island!' said Britomarte, laughing in spite of her sadness.

"Lord kape ye, will ye be having that into me teeth again? Sure ain't meself repenting in sackcloth and ashes for ivry unkind word I ever said against me swate island?" wailed Judith, sobbing and crying.

And then Britomarte laid her hand kindly on the girl's head and spoke gently and soothingly to her, and persuaded her to get up and accompany them down the mountain.

Now Judith's grief was not all real; neither was it all assumed. Her warm Irish heart was really grieved at the thought of leaving for ever a place to which she had become attached; but in addition to this, she considered it her sacred duty to give the island its due of grieving.

So she howled and wept, partly from real sorrow and partly for conscience sake. And she secretly teased Justin and Britomarte for not howling and weeping with her.

They descended the mountain and visited the grove that had been their first dwelling-place; and where Judith went through a second dutiful ceremony of howling; and then they looked into the hole that had been their first kitchen, and where Judith repeated her conscientious performances.

In a word, this accompaniment of howling attended them in all their farewell visits to favourite spots, and it had this good effect; in its utter ludicrousness it counteracted the feelings of sorrow with which Justin and Britomarte were bidding farewell to long familiar places.

It was not midnight when they returned to their home.

Justin offered up a short, but fervent evening worship, and then they separated and retired to rest. And though this was their last night on the lonely island that they might never expect to re-visit again, and they were on the eve of embarking for their dear native land, and thoughts and feelings were busy alike with tender regrets and joyful anticipations, yet—in consequence of the bodily fatigue they had endured that day, they fell asleep as soon as their heads had touched their pillows, and slept profoundly until morning.

The daylight creeping in at the windows woke Justin first.

He started up, dressed quickly, and without waking the women in the next room, went into the kitchen and made the fire, filled the kettle and hung it on, then cut some slices of bread to toast and rashers of bacon to fry, and laid the cloth for breakfast.

By the time he had accomplished these tasks, the sun arose, and he remembered that the boat would be at the beach waiting to take its last load to the ship.

So he filled two large baskets, took one on each arm, and hurried down to the landing, where the boat was waiting.

He put the baskets on board, and told the sailors to follow him up to the house, to bring away the trunks and boxes that were ready for them.

When they had loaded their boat and left the island, Justin proceeded to get the breakfast.

He made the coffee, fried the bacon, toasted the bread and boiled the eggs, and then sat down to wait until Britomarte and Judith should awake, for he was determined not to disturb them but to let them have their sleep out.

He had not sat long, however, before the door quickly opened and the two women entered, looking much surprised, and even ashamed, to see all the morning's work done, and all things ready for them.

"Oh, Justin, why did you not call us?" exclaimed Britomarte, regretfully.

"Because, dear sister, I am a Mussulman in my religious scruples against awakening a sleeper. And besides, I wished you to take the rest you so much needed," said Justin, cheerfully.

"But you have done all our work?"

"I hope I have done it well. I doubt it, though, in regard to the eggs. Perhaps I ought not to have put them on to boil until you made your appearance."

"Trotti," said Judith, examining the articles in question, "they are as hard and as cold as stones!"

"Put them on the fire and warm them over again, Judith. It will take but a few minutes," laughed Justin.

"Lorrd kape ye! Warm eggs over again! That's all a man knows about cooking! That the Lorrd may tache ye!" said Judith, looking at him with pity for his ignorance.

"Well, at any rate, you can boil some fresh ones, Judith," said Justin.

"And see," said Miss Conyers, "how much men know of cooking, Judith. What can be more delicate than this toast, or nicer than this ham, or richer than this coffee?"

"Thine for ye, ma'am. I'm not saying to the contrary. But that reminds me he has not made me a drop yet."

"Well, Judith, little as I know of cooking, I know that tea must not be made until it is to be drunk," said Justin.

"Lorrd bless ye! Did ye know that much? I shouldn't wonder if ye knowed how to salt potatoes," replied Judith, as she set her tea to draw.

"Come," urged Justin, "we will lose no more time in talking, but get our breakfast. The boat will be waiting for us."

And Judith put the breakfast on the table, and Britomarte and Justin sat down.

"The boxes are all gone, I see, Justin," said Miss Conyers as she poured out the coffee.

"Every one, except the last box; that is, of course, to come out of your chamber, containing your toilet conveniences, and that can go with us," he replied.

When breakfast was over they went to work at their final preparations for departure.

I said that they intended to leave the house with a portion of the furniture, clothing, and books, for the benefit of any future shipwrecked sufferers who might possibly be cast away upon the island.

So Britomarte went into the bedroom, made up the beds, tidied the room, and arranged the chairs, closed the windows, and fastened the door.

And while she was doing that, Judith washed up all the crockeryware and cooking utensils, and put them away in the cupboards, and then she cleaned up the kitchen, and put out the fire, and shut the windows and doors.

In the meantime, Justin went into the parlour and set the chairs, tables, lamps, and vases straight, placed a Bible, a hymn-book, an old copy of Shakespeare, an old almanack, a slate and pencil, and some

books and ink upon the bookshelves. Then he fastened the windows and doors.

Finally, the three friends having completed their work, met in the front passage.

"Trotti," said Judith, "whoever comes after us can't say as we're not good housekeepers; for sure they'll find everything convenient to their hands, so they will."

No one answered the girl. But Justin, with a grave face, summoned the two women to his side, and then reverently lifting his hat, returned thanks to Divine Providence for their long preservation on the Desert Island, and for their present happy deliverance—invoked his blessing on the island they were leaving, that it might yet become the cultivated and populous habitation of civilized and Christian men; and that their coming voyage might have a prosperous course and happy end.

And then the three went out of the house, closing the front door behind them, making their way to the beach, followed by the faithful little dog. Justin carried on his shoulder the last box, which came out of Britomarte's room.

Down on the sands they found the boat waiting for them, under the command of Lieutenant Ethel, who, to do them honour, had come in person to take them on board.

Crummie was already in the boat, to which she had been called by Judith's old device of a call of "warm water and water."

And now, with her nose in that delicious mess, she remained quiet enough while the boat was still.

Lieutenant Ethel stepped on shore, bowed profoundly to Britomarte, and held out his hand to Mr. Rose-thal, with a hearty "Good morning."

"I hope we have not kept you waiting," said Justin.

"Not a moment. We have only just got Mistress Cudd in here," laughed the young man, pointing to Crummie.

They all then got into the boat.

Justin went in immediately and stood by the head of the cow, with her hand on the creature's neck, ready to soothe and control her in case she should become frightened and resistive when the boat should begin to move.

But Crummie had seen too many ups and downs in this world to be disturbed by trifles, and so she made the passage to the ship with great composure.

CHAPTER L.

Speak, pilot of the storm-tossed barque

May I thy perils share?

Oh! instantmen, there are fearful ones,

The brave alone may dare!

Nay, ruler of the rebel deep,

What matters wind or wave?

The rocks that wreck your reeling deck

Will leave me sought to save! O. W. Holmes.

The captain of the Xyphias stood on the deck to receive his passengers.

The deck was a scene of great bustle, with the seamen getting ready to make sail. Some were weighing anchor, some loosing the topsails and the courses, and other ceiling down the ropes.

Through the crowd the captain led his passengers to the head of the gang-ladder, took them down below to the gun-deck, where his own quarters were situated, and assigned them berths in his own cabin.

Britomarte and her attendant had a state-room to themselves, and Justin had a share in the captain's state-room.

It appeared from all this that they were to be received as the captain's own guests, and have seats at his private table as well as berths in his cabin.

Having introduced his guests to their new quarters, the captain returned to his post on deck. And the noise of getting under weigh roared and thundered overhead.

Britomarte and Judith went into their state-room to inspect it and lay aside the small parcels that they had brought from the house in their hands.

And then Britomarte asked Justin to attend them up on deck that they might watch their island as long as it should continue in sight.

They went up and stood in the stern of the ship, leaning over the taffrail, and looking upon the island, until the Xyphias began to heave and turn, and then, as the wind filled her canvas, to sail away for the open sea.

They watched the lonely isle as it gradually receded from their sight, until palm trees, rocks and caverns were mingled in one undistinguishable mass of colour—they watched it until it dropped lower and lower down towards the horizon—and its outline became confused with the boundaries of sky and sea; and then they turned away, and Britomarte drew her veil to hide her fast-falling tears.

When she lifted it again there was nothing around her but the lonely sea and sky.

The captain came to her side, and spoke, cheerfully:

"The cabin of a man-of-war is not exactly that of a first-class ocean steamer, Miss Conyers, nor was it designed especially with a view to the accommodation of ladies. Nevertheless, we are so happy to have a lady with us that we shall do all in our power to make you comfortable."

"I am very sure you will, captain," answered Britomarte.

"And this I will say for your encouragement. Although you came on board with the full knowledge that you were cruising about in quest of privateers, with no prospect of going home for some time to come; and although you may think your chance of seeing your native country a very poor one, yet I can assure you that it is not so. We are very likely to fall in with homeward-bound merchant vessels, by one of which you could take a direct passage."

"Ah! heaven send that we may!" exclaimed Britomarte.

"See now how anxious she is to get away, from us—before she has tried us for one hour, too," said the captain, turning to Justin, with a much reproached air.

"She has been an exile from home for more than two years," gravely answered Justin.

"Ah! yes. Well, we must send her home as soon as we can. And if we don't fall in with a homeward-bound ship, we may capture a pirate, and send it home under the charge of one of our lieutenants, and our fair passenger with her. In the meantime we must try to make Miss Conyers as happy as possible here."

The jolly captain's idea of making people happy was to give them much more than enough of the very best food.

So he sent down to the stoward and had a mutton-laid in his cabin, to which he invited his three passengers.

Out of courtesy they accepted his invitation; but, having breakfasted at eight, they could make but a poor pretence to lunch at eleven. At two they had a sumptuous dinner, at five they had tea, and at eight supper.

And all this eating and drinking made such a hard day's work that the captain's pampered passengers were glad to turn in at ten o'clock.

The next morning, to awake and remember that they had left the lonely island for ever, and were far away on the ocean again, with a prospect, though ever so remote, of once more reaching their native land, and greeting their old friends, was a sensation of strangely mingled pain and joy, such as it is seldom the fate of human beings to experience.

This second day of their voyage was a pleasant one than the first, principally because the captain, having discovered the temperate habits of his passengers, did not insist upon their making five meals a day.

They were steering for Cape Town, where the captain hoped to anchor by the end of that current week.

"We may meet a homeward-bound vessel there," he said; "if so, we will put you on board of her."

"It is you who are now anxious to get rid of us, captain," said Miss Conyers, archly.

And the jolly captain put on the air of a very much injured man, and vowed that Miss Conyers did him great wrong.

The ship was constantly on the look-out for pirates, so he kept a man at the mast-head day and night, relieving him every two hours.

But night followed day, and day succeeded night, and still no sail of any sort was to be seen on all the lonely sea.

Nevertheless, this was one of the happiest periods that our three friends ever passed. The weather was charming, the sky clear, the sea calm, the wind light, and the ship flew on over the waters at the rate of ten knots an hour.

The ship's captain, and officers were all extremely pleasant companions, and unaffectedly glad to have these guests along with them to break the monotony of their sea-life.

During the continuance of the fine weather, the three passengers spent every day on deck, and every evening in the captain's cabin.

Usually the captain, the chaplain, Justin, and Britomarte formed a party, and played a rubber or two of whist.

Sometimes, to vary the evening's pastime, Miss Conyers would exercise her talent for dramatic reading, and on these latter occasions, all the officers that could be spared from the deck would be invited into the captain's cabin to receive their share of the entertainment.

Sometimes, also, Miss Conyers sang for her friends. And this stinging was perhaps the greatest treat she could give them.

A woman's sweet voice, carolling their favourite

swims on the blue water was a novelty and a delight indeed.

Thus pleasantly passed the days until Saturday morning, when they made Table Mount. And on Saturday noon they anchored in Table Bay.

Justin and Britomarte went on shore to call upon their friends at Cape Town.

They went first to the South African College, but learned there that their old acquaintance Professor Jack, had gone to Europe to collect certain rare scientific works for his library.

Then they went out to Silver Tree Villa to see their esteemed friends the Burneys.

They found the Reverend Doctor and his family at home and in good health, but immeasurably astonished and delighted to see Mr. Rosenthal and Miss Conyers, for they had heard of the wreck of the *Sultana*, and had supposed their young friends to have been lost.

And next it was the turn of Justin and Britomarte to be equally astonished and delighted, for they learned that the lifeboat containing the missionary party, after drifting about the ocean for several days, had been picked up by a Dutch merchantman bound for the Cape of Good Hope, and all the passengers rescued; that the Elys and the Bretons had remained guests at Silver Tree Grove for a month, during which subscriptions had been ordered in the churches to raise a fund for their relief, and at the end of which, being entirely re-fitted out, they had sailed in the *East Indian* Djama for Calcutta, en route for their distant field of missionary labour, where in due time they had safely arrived.

Mrs. Burney was able to assure Miss Conyers that her friends were well and doing well, for she heard from them by every Indian mail.

Great was the surprise and joy of Justin and Britomarte on hearing this news.

"Then, after all, the crew of that boat must have been rescued and taken the two men on board," said Justin.

"I suppose when Captain Mackenzie refused to leave the ship he left room in the boat for one, and they managed to make room for the other," observed Britomarte.

"It is as if they were given back to us from the dead," said Justin.

"I am thinking of little Mrs. Ely's poor old father. I am so glad he is not left childless in his old age. He could not have had time to feel any anxiety either. He must have heard of her safety before he could have heard of the shipwreck."

"Yes."

"What news this will be for Judith, by the way."

"Yes. I can see her face now."

"But, Justin, which boat was her sweetheart in, do you know? If he was in the boat with the missionaries he was saved," anxiously exclaimed Miss Conyers.

Justin reflected a moment, and then answered: "I do not know? I have been trying to recollect, but in vain. Heaven grant that he may have been saved, for the poor faithful girl's sake."

They dined with the Burneys, but were obliged to decline all further hospitality as the length of their ship's stay at Cape Town was very uncertain.

So they took an affectionate leave of their friends, and returned on board the *Xyphias* in good time for the captain's early supper-table, which was spread with all the luxuries to be obtained at Cape Town.

"I have news of the *Sea Scourge*. She touched here the day before yesterday, remained a few hours to get in wood and water, and also to pick up a few seamen, and then she sailed again," said the captain, as they sat down to supper.

"Where?" eagerly inquired Justin.

"East and north. Going, no doubt, to meet returning East Indians from Calcutta. We must go in pursuit of her, and lose no time about it either. So, Mr. Rosenthal, we sail with the first tide to-morrow."

"I am rejoiced to hear it," said Justin.

"I have caused inquiries to be made, and find that there are no homeward bound ships in the harbour. So this young lady, I am selfishly glad to know, has no option but to go on with us for the present," added the captain.

"Unless she prefers the hospitality tendered her by the Burneys; in which case she can remain at Silver Tree Villa, and wait for a homeward bound ship. What do you say, Miss Conyers?" inquired Justin, turning towards her.

"I say that, with the captain's kind permission, I will stay where I am," replied Britomarte.

And so that matter was settled.

But it was not until Miss Conyers found herself alone for a few moments, in her state room with her companion that she told Judith the joyful news about the rescue and preservation of the missionary party.

The effect upon the Irish girl was very different from that which Britomarte had anticipated.

"That I niver may sin!" cried Judith. "And I've been wearing out their clothes all this time!"

"Oh, Judith, don't think of their clothes! but of their rescued lives, and thank heaven for their preservation!" said Miss Conyers.

"And thin to think that all me hard graving wint for nothing. So much lost labour intirely," complained Judith.

"Oh, girl, girl! it seems to me that you are sorry they were saved," said Miss Conyers.

"Divil a bit iv me is sorry they were saved. But it's sorry I am to me heart's core for wearing out all their good clothes, let alone losing me labour wid saving to them. Faix meself wishes people would let us know it, and not be fooling."

"Judith, I often think that there are times and seasons when you are *non compos mentis*."

"Troth meself don't see what the compass has got to do wid it. But sure that Indy shawl will niver do to go on her shoulders agin! What wid the sun and the rain and the salt any wather itself, it's spilt entirely."

Britomarte gave it up. She longed to know whether Judith's lover had been in the boat with the missionaries, but she forbore to inquire of Judith, who alone could tell her.

And she reasoned that if Fore-top Tom had been in the rescued life-boat Judith would have known it, and would have manifested more joy at its preservation; and if he had not been there, he must have been lost in the other one, and the bringing up of his name would be useless as well as cruel.

Subsequently in the cabin Britomarte said to Justin, "I feel quite sure that Judith's Tom was not in the boat that was saved; for when I spoke of it she never mentioned his name."

"I'm sorry for that. Then he must have been in the boat with yourself and Judith and her father, as was natural, as he belonged to the same party. Can you not recollect?" inquired Mr. Rosenthal.

"Oh, Justin! I was so stunned with sorrow at leaving you alone on the wreck, that I saw nothing around me. I only watched the wreck until it dropped down behind the horizon out of sight, and then I closed my eyes and never wished to open them again," she answered.

"My dearest Britomarte!"

"There! that will do, Justin. Don't let us grow sentimental."

"The weather promises to be fine," said the captain coming down the companion ladder.

"Let us hope that the weather will keep its promise," answered Justin a little confusedly, for he fancied that the captain's words had a double meaning.

They played their rubber of whist as usual and then retired to rest.

CHAPTER LI.

Ye sailors on the mighty deep,
Your sacred oaths we bid you keep,
We bid you faithful stand;
The laws your fathers writ in blood,
The flag they bore through flame and flood,
Keep with true heart and hand!

Amos.

With the first tide the next morning the ship sailed.

The weather kept its promise and was very fine. The ship steered north-east, flying before a fresh wind at the rate of ten or eleven knots an hour.

And all day long our passengers lounged upon the deck, reading, promenading or chatting; and all the evening they played whist in the captain's cabin. And day and night the captain kept a man at the mast-head on the look-out, and relieved him every two hours, that his vigilance might not slacken.

But days and nights went by and there was no sign of the *Sea Scourge*, or any other ship on all the lonely sea.

The officers as well as the crew became impatient. "Here we have been cruising for six months since we sailed from London, and we haven't fallen in with a pirate, nor had the least prospect of an engagement! The only adventure we have had was the rescuing of the shipwrecked party on that island."

Such was the chief burden of the various complaints made by officers and men alike.

The captain only was contented.

"We shall overhaul the pirate sooner or later! When we do, see that you do your duty," he said.

And he walked the quarter-deck all day and played whist in the cabin all night, or nearly so. And day and night kept his man at the mast-head on the look-out, with orders to keep his eyes peeled; and relieved him every two hours that he might not have occasion to wink on his watch.

And so many days and nights passed and still there was no sign of the *Sea Scourge* or any other ship on all the lonely sea. And the officers and crew were almost desperate, but too well disciplined to mutiny.

At length one evening when the tropical full moon

and great stars made all the sea and sky as bright as day, and the officers off duty were lounging on the deck, and the captain and his party were playing whist in the cabin, there came a cry from the man at the mast-head:

"Sail ho!"

It roused the officers on deck like the blast of a trumpet does the war-horses. They "snuffed the battle afar off."

It startled all the whist players in the cabin, except the phlegmatic captain, who went on counting his points.

"Two by tricks and two by honours, and five before! We're nine to their nine, Miss Conyers. And now all depends upon the odd trick. So we must look sharp! I knew we should overhaul her at last! Parson, it's my deal."

But no one listened to the captain. Every one was straining their ears to catch the voices from the deck.

"Sail ho!"

The cry rang through the night air like an alarm. "Where away?" called the officer of the forward watch.

"About three points off our weather bows."

"What do you make of her?"

"Can't make her out yet!"

While this bawling was going on aloft, the captain of the ship sat quietly over his rubber of whist.

Presently Lieutenant Ethel came below, touched his cap, and said:

"If you please, sir, we have made a strange sail."

"What do you make of her?" inquired the captain, without ceasing to deal his cards.

"We can make nothing of her as yet, except that she appears to have seen us and is running away."

"That proves her to be the *Sea Scourge*, or some other pirate! Clap on all the sail we can carry and chase! Diamonds! Parson, it is your lead, and we are waiting for you! Miss Conyers, look sharp! We are playing for the odd trick," said the captain, as he turned up the trump and sorted his cards.

The young lieutenant went on deck with his orders. And soon the ship flew under the pressure of her sails.

The captain went on with his game and played well; and as none of his excited companions could give sufficient attention to the business in hand fairly to compete with him, he won the odd trick.

"We've beat them in the rub, Miss Conyers. Shall we try to beat them in another one?" inquired the captain, as he gathered up the cards.

"Oh no! pray don't. Let us go up on deck, and look after the chase!" eagerly urged Britomarte.

"You!" exclaimed the captain, in laughing astonishment.

"Yes, I," answered Britomarte, as her eyes widened and brightened.

"Lord bless my soul alive, here is a young lady as eager for the fray as any of us!" laughed the captain.

"There is no necessity for haste, my dear young lady! We shall see nothing when we get there!—except what we have seen for so many days and nights—an expanse of sea and sky!" laughed the captain.

"But the strange sail?" eagerly questioned our amazon.

"Ay, the strange sail! You'll not see her, at all events! The men have made her out only through their glasses! She is miles away! and we shall not overhaul her before morning," said the captain.

"And in the morning?" aspirated Britomarte, breathing fiercely and glancing fire.

"Yes! in the morning, you will probably see a disturbance of the peace. Hmph! you have been in a hurricane, suffered shipwreck, and now you are to be in a sea-fight! It seems you are destined to prove all the perils of the deep!"

"But the sea-fight—"

"Heavens! how your eyes burn, young lady! You would like to be at one of the guns to-morrow, wouldn't you not?"

"That I would!" exclaimed the amazon.

And they went up on deck.

All was suppressed excitement there. "Well, Mr. Ethel, are we gaining on the chase?" inquired the captain of his second officer, his first one being ill in his hammock.

"No, sir, being a little," replied the young man, touching his cap.

"The demon! But those privateers are famous sea-running horses!—Set the 'gallant stun'-sails!"

The order was passed and executed.

And the ship leaped forward like a steed that feels the spur, and bounded onward through the waters, sending the foam flying in showers of phosphoric sparks each side her bowsprit.

Britomarte reeled and tottered; and clung to Justin's

arm to steady her steps, for she could scarcely keep her feet for the violent motion of the ship that rolled as tremendously as she ran.

"Miss Conyers, take my advice and let me lead you below," said Justin.

"Thanks," she replied. And he assisted her down into the cabin.

Leaving her there with Judith, he returned on deck and rejoined the captain.

"Mr. Ethel! See if we are gaining on the chase," said Captain Yetson after a few minutes had elapsed.

"Ay, ay, sir!" replied the young lieutenant. And walking forward a few paces, he sang out:

"Mast-head!"

"Ay, ay, sir!" bawled the man on the look-out.

"Are we gaining on the chase?"

"Ay, ay, sir; but gradually! We won't overhaul her at this rate before morning."

"That will do," said the captain, when the young officer made his report. "Keep her so. I do not care to overhaul her until daylight."

And he set the watch and went below, and turned in for a short nap, leaving Lieutenant Ethel to manage the ship.

Justin stayed on deck a little while longer, and then followed the captain's example.

But none of them, except the phlegmatic captain, rested very well that night. The thought that they were chasing a privateer, whom they would probably engage in battle next morning, was not likely to rock them to sleep.

Britomarte certainly never closed her eyes; she was kept awake no less by her own excitement than by the "tireless tongue" of Judith, who talked of nothing but the coming fight and the share she would like to take in it.

"Sure meself hopes they'll find something for me to do in it! Troth, if they'd put me to one iv the big guns, I could fire it off wid the best iv them. And if they'd not trust me to do that same, I could hand partridges as well as the powdy monkeys themselves!"

"Cartridges, Judith," said Miss Conyers.

"Sure that's what I'm maning! And troth I'll find something to do in it, or me name's not Judy Riordan!"

"I am glad and proud to see so much spirit in a sister woman, Judith, whether you find an opportunity of exercising it or not," said Miss Conyers.

At which Judith was so delighted that she went off into another fit of boasting more extravagant than the first.

To have heard Judith talk then, you would have imagined her to be Boadicea, Joan of Arc, and Moll Pitcher rolled into one.

So passed the night in the cabin.

Just before the dawn of day, Lieutenant Ethel came below to the captain and reported that the pirate was within range of their lee-bow gun.

"Fire a blank cartridge into her," said the captain, immediately turning out.

Britomarte and Judith overhead every word of this short interview. And Judith clapped her hands for joy, exclaiming:

"Now they're going to begin. Sure meself is happy as Paddy at Donnybrook Fair. And, oh! that I was up on deck wid the saymen! wouldn't I—"

Boom-m-me! thundered the cannon over the sea, with a report that shook the ship.

With a violent bound Judith leaped up, clapped her hands to her ears, and shaking and screaming with the extremity of terror, hid her head in Britomarte's lap.

"Why, what's the matter, Judith?" inquired Miss Conyers, as the sound rolled away.

"Is this your heroism?"

Boom-m-me! roared an answering gun from the chase.

"Ow-oo!" screeched Judith, burying her head in Britomarte's lap; "kiver me up! kiver me up! I'm kilt entirely!"

But Miss Conyers started up, threw the girl off her knees, hurried on her clothes, and hastened out into the cabin, where she met Justin leaving his stateroom.

"The action has commenced!" exclaimed Britomarte.

"Yes, dearest one. Stay where you are, I beseech you. You can do no good on deck," urged Justin.

"If I can do no good, I can at least risk my life with the others," persisted Britomarte.

"But to what end? Britomarte, you will not only do no good by going on deck, but you will do much harm by being in everybody's way," said Justin, bluntly.

She looked intently in his face to see if he spoke in earnest, before she answered:

"If that be so, I will stay here. But oh, how unwillingly!"

And she sat down, only half resigned to her in-

activity, and meditated how she could change it into good service.

While they spoke, another shot was exchanged between the ships.

Justin hurried up on deck.

Everything there was in admirable order. None of the confusion that too often precedes an engagement appeared.

The deck was cleared for action.

The men were all at their quarters, the officers at their posts.

The captain was standing on the quarter deck, pointing his glass at the pirate, which was, moreover, in full sight about two miles ahead.

The firing ceased for the time being.

"What is the meaning of this lull, captain?" respectfully inquired Justin Rosenthal, coming to the side of Captain Yetson.

Sailors will swear, more is the pity, and Captain Yetson, dropping the telescope to his side, uttered a tremendous oath, under the impression that he had a sufficient provocation to do so, and then he added:

"We are on a false scent, sir. We have been chasing an English ship."

"Are you certain?" doubtfully inquired Justin.

"Humph! These infernal pirates sometimes show false colours. This is what has happened, Mr. Rosenthal. When I came up on deck I found her within good range of our lee-bow chaser. I ran up the Union Jack and sent a blank cartridge into her by way of a visiting card. She returned the compliment by firing a salute from her stern-chaser; but did not show her colours, and did not cease to run."

"And then?"

"I sent a more urgent message to her in the form of a round shot from our lee-bow chaser. She returned the fire in kind and hoisted another Jack."

"But didn't heave to?"

"No, nor cease to run away from us. Whatever she does, she does not cease to run."

"But an English ship, or an honest ship, scarcely would do that."

"Scarcely. And that is what makes the affair doubtful and awkward. If she be one of our ships we have no business to pursue her; but if she be a pirate sailing under our colours we must take her."

While the captain spoke, Mr. Rosenthal had been attentively regarding the chase. Now he said:

"The longer I look at that ship, the more familiar she seems to me. Will you lend me your telescope, captain?"

Captain Yetson handed the glass and waited the result of Justin's inspection.

Justin pointed the instrument and took deliberate sight at the chase. He viewed it attentively for a minute and then returned the telescope to the owner, saying quietly:

"You are not on a false scent, captain."

"Ex? What do you make of her?"

"The pirate, Sea Scourge."

"Are you quite certain?"

"Quite. I cannot be mistaken. Indeed, I recognized her by naked eye from her general appearance. And when I brought the glass to bear upon her, I knew her also by individual marks."

The captain of the Xyphias waited to hear no more. He laid down his telescope, sprang upon the poop deck, and drew out his speaking-trumpet.

As the men had scarcely taken their eyes off their captain during the fifteen minutes of suspense in which they stood idly at their quarters, there was no need to call their attention.

The captain put the speaking-trumpet to his lips and thundered forth the words:

"My lads, the prize that we have been seeking, the pirate Sea Scourge, is before us. And please heaven, she shall be ours before night."

Tremendous cheers from the seamen responded to the captain's pithy speech, and proved their goodwill to the work before them, and their confidence of victory.

(To be continued.)

EVA ASHLEY.

CHAPTER LII.

BESSIE FINDS A CLUE.

"Is she better?" asked the voice of Mr. Radway at the door of Bessie's room, on the following morning.

"If Miss Wilde is calm enough now to see me I shall be glad to come in and speak with her."

Bessie heard him, and a very different expression from that with which she had received his first advances towards an acquaintance flashed into her face.

With eager interest and expectation she turned towards the door and said:

"Yes, I am quite well now, and strong enough to

hear all that your brother has to communicate to me. Mrs. Radway, pray let him come in."

Bessie was up and dressed, but she was pale and looking ill, for she had passed a wretched night after the inconsiderate revelation made to her by her hostess.

When she recovered sufficiently to think and act for herself she insisted on seeing Mr. Radway immediately; but she was informed that on hearing of her indisposition he had again gone to join his friend at the hotel, so there was no alternative but to wait till the next morning, though in the new dread that assailed her on her mother's account, Bessie with a trembling hand traced a few lines to Mr. Radway, and paid the servant who was sent up to wait on her a shilling to get them sent at once to the hotel.

Her note contained the following words:

"MR. RADWAY.—Through your sister I have learned your suspicions as to my identity with the child of Mr. Frank Wilde, so long supposed dead, and also the hostile intentions of your friends towards my unfortunate mother. I write this to conjure them through you to pause until I can communicate with them. I am the daughter of Mr. Wilde, but until within a few days past I was not aware of the deception which had so long deprived the true heiress of the Ashleys of her birthright. So soon as I became aware of the false position I occupy, I came hither to trace her and restore to her what I have innocently deprived her of. My poor mother is penitent, and she at last revealed to me the fraud she had practised under a degree of temptation which forms some excuse for her conduct."

"Captain Martin was once a friend to her. He owes a debt of gratitude to my grandfather, and from him I claim mercy and forbearance towards his erring daughter. When he learns under what painful circumstances the crime was committed he will condemn her less. I entreat him, for my sake, to spare her as far as possible, and at least to wait till I have seen and talked with him myself."

"BESSIE WILDE."

The note had been forwarded to its destination, and Mr. Radway was now awaiting admission to its unhappy writer to inform her of the effect it had produced.

When he entered the room, Bessie smiled and held out her hand, as she said:

"Pardon me for the way I treated you when you first addressed me in the train. I had no idea then that I was thrusting away my father's friend."

"You are very excusable, my dear Miss Wilde, for I am aware that I am not a very attractive person at first sight, and—well, perhaps I do sometimes thrust my calling unreasonably on strangers, but it's my master's work, you know, child, and I must do it while it is yet day. But I see you are impatient to know the result of your appeal to Captain Martin, and I will no longer keep you in suspense. He is yet in the city, and Mr. Hunter remains until he is ready to leave. I may as well tell you that they have decided not to go to Ashurst till you are well enough to accompany them."

Bessie clasped her hands in thankfulness, and, after a pause, said:

"I thank you for your intercession in my poor mother's favour more than words can express. I certainly will receive them this evening. And now tell me all that you know of my father, Mr. Radway, and how you came to take such interest in a stranger as to induce you to bring me to your sister's house?"

"Well, as to the last I overheard what you said, and I concluded that you had run off from your home, or you would not have left your trunk behind you. That made me anxious to save you from some snare into which I was afraid you were rushing. But I had another motive, too, which I will explain."

"Several weeks ago I had a letter from Captain Martin, dated from Liverpool, telling me that he wished me to go down to a place called Ashurst in the county you came from, and quietly make inquiries into the affairs of the Ashley family. After gathering all the information I could concerning them, I was to come back to London in time to meet him on the arrival of his ship."

"I stopped at the Jolly Angler, which, you know, is only a few miles from Ashurst, and used my time to the best advantage. I learned some very curious gossip from the old woman that keeps the house, but it was chiefly about Mr. Leon Ashley, who lately came back to this country, and I could learn very little about the widow of the judge and the young lady who lived with her."

"I had just taken my seat in the train when you came in, and as you were from the same part of the country, by securing you I thought I could learn something more about the people I was interested in. You know how badly we got along together; but I persevered till I succeeded in bringing you here,

intending to question you about what I wished to know on the first opportunity that presented itself.

"Until you took your bonnet off after coming in, I did not suspect that you were related to Frank Wilde, but the moment I saw you fairly I said to myself:

"I don't believe Frank's daughter died at all, for this girl is his living image, and I begin to see now why Jack Martin sent me to Ashurst. He was just hunting his child up."

"Full of this idea, I went to the hotel to hear the strangest tales from Martin. I found with him a gentleman named Hunter, who many years ago employed Wilde's wife as nurse to an infant whose mother had just died.

"That child was Squire Ashley's grand-daughter, and the captain now insists that Mrs. Wilde made away with the heiress that she might put her own child in her place."

At this last statement Bessie became very much agitated. She cried:

"Surely the man who once knew and loved my mother, cannot really believe that she would do a greater wrong to the heiress than to deprive her of her birthright? He wrongs her cruelly by such a suspicion; for, badly as she acted, she believed she placed the child in as good a position as that of which she deprived her. The wife of a wealthy merchant in this city adopted the little girl, and pledged her word to rear and provide for her as if she were her own. My purpose in coming hither as I have done, is to discover where Mr. Allen lives, and reveal to Miss Ashley her true name."

Radway stared at her in surprise.

"Was that why you ran away? for I am sure you did run away. If so, I may spare my lectures, for you are already one of the elect. If a young girl like you could leave her luxurious home clandestinely to come on such an errand as this, she must always have a good angel near her. Did you realize that you must give place to the true Miss Ashley if she be found?"

"I beg you will not praise me, sir, for what I did; for to be honest I could not have acted otherwise. Miss Ashley is welcome to the estate I give up to her, and more than welcome to the father I was almost glad to learn—was not mine. Since Mrs. Samson has told you of Mr. Ashley's doings, I need not hesitate to speak thus of him. The old lady is not apt to be sparing of imparting information on topics she is familiar with, and unhappily there is too much to be told that is not creditable to that gentleman."

The old man wiped the unctuous moisture from his face, and in a kind tone, replied:

"She did not spare him, certainly, and I know enough to understand your feelings on this subject. Miss Bessie, you are a precious lamb of the true flock, and are worthy to be the daughter of noble Frank Wilde, for he was one of nature's noblemen. I will now tell you all I know of him, if you wish me to do so."

"Ah! do, Mr. Radway, for I am anxious to learn all I can of my poor father."

After a pause, during which Mr. Radway seemed to be collecting his thoughts, he began:

"I never knew your father till after that fearful shipwreck in which he so nearly perished. He came back to this country, hoping to gain the insurance on his father-in-law's ship, but he never succeeded. He had married just before he sailed on his last voyage, and he learned on his return home that a daughter had been born to him during his absence, but all clue to both wife and child was lost.

"He traced them to London, and it was then I made his acquaintance. Mrs. Radway has kept boarders in London for the last twenty years, and Mr. Wilde was taken sick in her house. He sent for me to visit him. I found him a true-hearted Christian, and I formed a strong attachment to him.

"He recovered, but he still lingered here, hoping to find some trace of his lost treasure. One day he came back from a visit he had made to an old friend on a national ship that had just come into port; what Captain Martin then told him I never knew till last night.

"Poor Frank packed up his things with that white look of despair which only a death-blow to hope can bring to a man's face. Martin came to the house several times before Wilde left us, and they had long private conversations with each other.

"At last Martin told my sister and myself that Wilde's wife and child were both dead; that he had made the discovery himself, and brought him the news. That accounted for his state, poor fellow; and although we pitied him with our whole hearts, he would not listen to any attempt at consolation even from me."

"He went away on another voyage after this, and was absent several years; but he came back to us to die, and we took the best care of him during his illness, and sent to its destination the letter he left with

us for Mrs. Margaret Wilde Ashley, as soon as the funeral was over. I wondered then who she could be, but I never for one moment suspected that she was the wife poor Frank had broken his heart about, because she had married another man before being sure that he had really perished. This is all I have to tell you concerning as good and true a man as any girl may be proud to claim for her father!"

Tears were running down Bessie's cheeks; she held out her hand and faltered:

"How shall I thank you, sir, for your kindness to him and to me. I have still another favour to ask of you; bring hither the two gentlemen who are here to expose my mother; that I may endeavour to turn them from their purpose. I must save her from what I am sure would kill her; and when they learn that she has voluntarily confessed her wrong to me, and I have come hither to make such reparation as is now possible, they will surely have pity on her for my sake, if not for her own."

"My dear child, you need have no apprehensions on your mother's account. Captain Martin is inclined to be most lenient, and if you can furnish a clue to where Miss Ashley is to be found, I am certain that Mr. Hunter will not push matters to extremity."

"I can do that, for my mother furnished me with the name and address of the gentleman who adopted the infant. I came here to learn if she be still living, and I have already seen a relative of Mr. Allen's. His nephew has promised to write and gain the information I wish as soon as possible. This afternoon I shall probably hear something from Mr. Allen which will be satisfactory."

"Miss Wilde, I hardly know which to admire most—your noble resignation of fortune and station as soon as you learned that they were not legitimately your own, or the acuteness and nerve with which you have prosecuted your inquiries since you came to London. Let me spare you all further trouble by writing down the address of Mr. Allen, and giving it to Mr. Hunter, whose business it now is to seek out his kinswoman's daughter, and see that justice is done to her."

Bessie gladly assented to this, and the address given her by Mr. Allen was transferred to him. She earnestly said:

"I hope Mr. Hunter will take no further steps in the affair till I hear from George Heath. The youth who was so attentive to me in the train turns out to be a nephew of the gentleman to whom I first applied, and on going to his house I met him there. He has written to Mr. George Allen, who is also a relative of his, and I am sure he will bring the reply to his letter to me as soon as it reaches him."

"I think I can also answer for Mr. Hunter on that score. There seems to be no disposition on the part of either gentleman to be harsh towards your mother, and Captain Martin distinctly stated that he had strong reasons to protect her from the consequences of her crime on your account."

"I am very much obliged to him, I am sure; but I cannot imagine how or where he could have learned anything concerning me, except from the note I sent you last evening."

"Were you not in Scotland last summer, and did you not there make the acquaintance of a young artist?"

She blushed vividly, as she replied:

"You refer to Mr. Delancey, I presume?"

"I do—you may remember that he was called to London to visit a sick friend. That friend was Captain Martin. Mr. Delancey showed him a miniature of yourself he had painted from memory; Martin at once recognized the striking resemblance it bore to his old friend, Wilde; he had become aware of your mother's second marriage, and as soon as he heard the name of Ashley as belonging to you he understood at once the fraud which had been committed."

"Did he—did he betray his suspicions to Mr. Delancey?" she faltered.

"He may have done so—I did not inquire into that; I was too deeply interested in the remainder of his story. Martin was too ill to follow up his discovery at that time, and when he had recovered sufficiently to do so he was ordered to take command of his ship. But he wrote to Mrs. Ashley, and as the price of his forbearance towards herself he demanded that she should restore the heiress of the Ashleys to her true position, and give her consent to the marriage of her own daughter with young Delancey. No reply came, and he went on his way determined to unmask her on his return."

"Captain Martin was detained in Liverpool by some necessary repairs to his ship, and he seized the opportunity to run over to Paris in search of Hunter, whom he had accidentally met many years before; at that time he learned from him that Mrs. Wilde had been employed by him as nurse to Squire Ashley's grand-daughter. Martin knew that Hunter lived chiefly at Paris and Baden, and as the season at the

latter place was over, he hoped to find him in the city."

"After some trouble he came up with him sure enough, and when Hunter heard what he had to tell him, he determined to return to this country with him, and his young relation and restore her to her family. The ship arrived yesterday morning, and the note you sent to me last night delayed the journey they were about to undertake. They agreed to see you first, and decide afterwards on their future proceedings."

"How thankful I am that I came hither," said Bessie. "By doing so I have saved my poor Minny from disgrace that would have been worse than death. Yes, Mr. Radway, I ran away from my home when I learned that I had no right there, but it was to find her to whom it really belongs and restore her to her own. Believe me, my mother has been more unfortunate than wicked; her adoring love for her own child induced her to make the exchange, and if she had been permitted to take both children with her to Ashurst, the crime had never been committed. I do not defend it, Mr. Radway, but I must use every effort to shield the perpetrator of it, and love her tenderly in spite of all."

"Your mother seems to have repented, my dear young lady, or she would never have confessed to you. You are quite right to stand, by her, remembering that the repentant sinner is of more worth in the eyes of Omnipotence than the saintly and sinless just men. You look wearied now, and I will leave you to the repose you evidently need. This evening, if your headache does not return, I will bring my friends to visit you."

"Thank you; I shall be— I must be well enough to receive them when they come on such an errand as theirs."

Mr. Radway passed from the room and left her to reflect on the story he had related. How the intervening hours passed Bessie could scarcely have told.

Her frame was weakened by the attack of the previous night, and her mind was a chaos of doubts and fears as to the result of the approaching interview.

Save her mother she must, at the cost of any humiliation to herself, and she inexpressibly dreaded the meeting with her accusers which must take place in a few hours.

Even the certainty that one of them was the friend of her lover—that he had already endeavoured to win her mother over to her union with Delancey—could not reassure her sinking heart.

In the letter Bessie had left with Kate Welby for her betrothed, she had revealed to him as much as she dared of her anomalous position, and freed him from all ties to herself.

If Delancey ever sought her again, it must be as the daughter of a woman who had occupied a false position for so many years; who had made her the innocent sharer of the fraud, and Bessie, with an almost morbid sense of honour, felt that she could not blame him if he recoiled from allying himself with her under such humiliating and degrading circumstances. She had understood from Heath that he could get a reply from Mr. Allen by the afternoon mail, and she waited in intense suspense for his appearance. At five o'clock he sent up his card, and she went down to the parlour to receive him.

With boyish gloo he held up a letter and exclaimed:

"You've hit the right nail on the head, this time, Miss Wilde. My cousin George was the man, sure enough, but you can read, and see what he says for himself. I have not a moment to stay now, but I will call in to-morrow and see you again."

Thankful to be left alone while she perused what was so important to her, Bessie hurried up to her own room in a tumult of feeling it would be impossible to depict, and after soothing herself in, sat down to read the important letter Heath had given her.

In the envelope with it was a discoloured paper bearing a strange-looking seal, but scarcely glancing at it she put it aside till she had read what so deeply concerned her.

The letter ran thus:

"November 24th, 18—
"My Dear Boy.—Your letter, inquiring into events that happened long long ago, came safely to hand, and I am happy to give you the information you seek."

"I have no reason to deny that I am the Mr. Allen that your friend is in pursuit of, for I have done nothing that I consider reprehensible in the affair."

"Eighteen years ago my first wife, who was rich in her own right, took it into her head to adopt a child belonging to a respectable young woman whose name was Margaret Wilde. I indulged the whim of my poor Anna, for her health was too delicate for me to cross her in anything she had set her heart on."

"Mrs. Allen became so fond of the infant, that when we set out on a tour to the South of France, undertaken for her benefit, she insisted that the child should accompany us. I consented, as I always did to whatever she asked, though I felt assured in my own mind that my wife would never return to her own home alive.

"To cut the story short my poor angel died in Versailles. A woman, named Jane Tompkins, nursed her through her last illness, and at her suggestion I placed the little girl with a sister-in-law of hers, who took in children to nurse. She lived on the road to St. Cloud, and I left the child with Madame Tompkins, paying her six months in advance.

"I intended to console myself for the loss of my dear Anna by making an extensive tour, but before it was scarcely begun, my plans were set at naught by a summons from home which could not be neglected.

"The mercantile house in which the chief part of my wealth was invested was threatened to be on the brink of failure, and there was no time to be lost in returning if I would be in time to save my hard-earned fortune.

"In the hurry and perplexity of my mind I forgot the child, but I meant at some future time to write and have her brought over to me, for as my lost wife had adopted her, I did not wish her to be thrown on the world after she was gone.

"The next few years were spent in such a turmoil that I had no time to attend to anything but my own affairs.

"Just as I had come out of the wreck with half my fortune gone I heard that the little girl I had left with Madame Tompkins was dead.

"The priest of the parish in which she died sent me the enclosed notice, which you will see certifies that in the year 18—, Ida Allen, daughter of George and Anna Allen, died in France, and was buried there.

"I married again, as you know, have children of my own, and for years I have scarcely thought of the poor little waif Anna adopted. Since she has friends to claim her, I am sorry Ida did not live to become a solace to them. She was a charming child, and would, undoubtedly, have developed into a lovely woman.—Yours truly,
GEORGE ALLEN."

Bessie breathed a sigh of relief as she lifted the certificate, and glanced over it.

"So she is dead," she murmured, "and Minny will escape exposure. Mr. Hunter cannot be so cruel as to persecute her when no good can come of it."

CHAPTER LIII.

HUNTER FINDS ANOTHER CLUE.

Bessie calmed her emotions as far as was possible in the prospect of the agitating interview that awaited her.

Mrs. Radway, at the request of her brother, sent up her tea, and managed to keep the back parlour clear of other boarders till the expected visitors arrived.

Bessie went down to receive them with great inward tremor, but she grasped the letter of Mr. Allen in her hand as the warrant of her mother's safety, and nerved her heart for the meeting she dreaded so much.

When she entered the room, Captain Martin stepped forward to meet her, and, taking her hand in his own, impulsively said:

"I require no introduction to the daughter of Frank Wilde, nor yet to her who claims Margaret Brandon as her mother. Reassure yourself, my dear Miss Wilde, for we have come hither with only the most friendly intentions. Both Mr. Hunter and myself earnestly desire to screen your mother, as far as possible, from the consequences of what she has done."

"How shall I thank you for your forbearance?" murmured the overwrought girl, bursting in tears. "Here, Mr. Hunter, is a letter concerning your young relative which was brought to me this evening. It will inform you that all interference on her behalf is now useless."

Hunter took the paper from her trembling hand, and after placing her in a chair near the fire, he retired towards the gauntlet to read the letter she had given him.

While he was thus occupied, Captain Martin seated himself beside Bessie, and said everything he could think of to console and sustain the poor girl, towards whom his heart warmed, not only as the daughter of his early friend, but as the betrothed of one he loved as sincerely as he did Delancey.

She presently wiped away her tears, stifled her agitation, and tried to believe that all would yet be well.

Hunter read over the certificate twice, after perusing Mr. Allen's letter, and stood many moments absorbed

in thought before he remembered her who awaited his decision in such painful suspense.

When he at length turned towards her, she was at a loss to interpret the singular expression his face wore.

He took her hand in his own, and vaguely spoke:

"Pardon me the pain I have unintentionally given you, my dear Miss Wilde. I remember your mother as a most fascinating creature, in spite of the cloud that rested over her at the time I made her acquaintance. I was scarcely surprised when I heard that her employer had made her his wife, for so fair a temptation is rarely thrown in a man's way. This paper assures me that I can spare her, and I rejoice that it is so, for I have every inclination to be lenient towards her, for the sake of the daughter who so promptly endeavoured to repair the wrong inflicted by her mother as soon as it became known to her."

"How shall I thank you for such kindness? All words fail me in such a crisis as this, Mr. Hunter," said the excited girl. "But oh, believe that at the last my poor mother clung to her own child with such passionate fondness, that she could not give her up, and in a moment of dire temptation she committed the wrong for which, I am sure, she has bitterly repented."

"I trust so, Miss Wilde, and your presence here on such an errand as brought you hither at least assures me that you had no part in the deception which has been so long successfully sustained. I will now, with your permission, explain to you the manner in which I was led to suspect that my cousin's child had never been received in the house of her grandfather."

Bessie bowed, and Hunter went on to state the confidences on this subject which at long intervals had been exchanged between himself and Captain Martin.

She listened with absorbing interest, but her fluctuating colour and the tremulous motion of her lips showed him that she was suffering from extreme agitation.

When the recital was ended he arose and courteously said:

"You will need a good night's rest, Miss Wilde, to prepare you for the journey back to the country, which Captain Martin and myself wish you to undertake to-morrow in company with us, if you are strong enough to do so. I must see Mr. Leon Ashley, and my friend is equally desirous of having an interview with your mother."

"I shall hold myself in readiness, sir; and I am very thankful that the wild chase I undertook in an hour of extreme excitement has met with so speedy and satisfactory a conclusion."

"The end is not yet," thought Hunter; but he said nothing more; and Captain Martin took leave of Bessie with the assurance that in the meeting he sought with her mother he had no intention of reproaching her with what she had done, but simply to use such power over her as he possessed to serve the cause of a young friend of his who should be nameless.

At this evident allusion to Delancey the quick blood leapt to her cheek, and her dewy eyes were for an instant raised to his with an expression of gratitude which repaid him for the forbearance he had exercised through his great desire to spare her pain.

When the two friends gained the street, Martin said to his companion:

"Is she not charming? If her mother had even been more guilty, I should have been inclined to spare her not only for the sake of her noble child, but for that of the youngster who loves her."

"She is indeed very lovely," replied Hunter, still speaking as one in a dream. "I have seldom seen a fairer woman. What a singular complexion. Strange—strange!"

Martin turned towards him, and looked curiously in his face.

"What is so strange?—I am curious to know."

"Martin, I hold the clue to a most singular drama, nearly all the complications of which arise from the conduct of one unprincipled man, whose baseness I will expose before I rest. Tell me one thing: is not the young Delancey of whom I have heard you speak the next heir to the Arden estate in failure of a child of Leon Ashley's second wife?"

"Yes. His father was cousin german to Grace Arden and bore the same name; but he took that of Delancey to gain a small estate left him by a maternal uncle on those terms. But poor Ernest will never be benefited by his heirship, for Mrs. Ashley left a daughter, who now lives with her father at Arden Place. I am told that she is very charming. Young Wentworth fell in love with her when they met in France last summer; but her wretch of a father declares she shall never marry him."

"I know this young man. I met with him at Baden last summer; and I am also aware that he

and Evelyn Ashley are attached to each other. But I am certain that she is not the daughter of Leon Ashley's second wife, though he has imposed her on the world as such that he might retain possession of the Arden estate."

Martin dropped his arm, and stared at him as if he was doubtful of his sanity; but Hunter calmly proceeded with his explanation:

"I will give you my grounds for this belief as briefly as possible. This autumn I had a severe attack of illness in Paris, and I called in a physician who had many years ago attended the family of Leon Ashley. Wishing to make himself agreeable to me, Dr. Ledru talked to me of my countrymen whom he had known. Among them he spoke of Ashley, whose name, for many reasons, possessed vivid interest for me. I led him to talk on about him, and Ledru described the illness of the infant daughter on whose life such important interests hung. The doctor declared that he believed that no skill could save her when he advised her removal from Paris as her only chance. Yet a miracle was performed in her favour, for after an absence of two years, Ashley came back to Paris, bringing him the little girl in perfect health, and as vigorous as if she had never known an hour's sickness."

"Ledru went on to add, that after such a resurrection as that he had recommended Madame Tompkins's house, and the air of the country around St. Cloud, as the most salubrious he knew anything of, for it had brought life out of apparent death."

"Well, what does that lead to?" asked the puzzled captain.

"I will soon show you. This certificate proves that a child was buried from the house of the woman named; the date proves that it was the same year in which Ashley's child was supposed to be in extremity; he went thither, no doubt, at the instigation of the woman's sister, Jane Tompkins, who was the child's sick-nurse, and found there the little girl abandoned by George Allen. She was, doubtless, substituted for the deceased one, and, by the Providence of God, the daughter of my cousin Eva fell into the hands of her own father, and she is the young girl Bessie Wilde came hither to seek. I shall seek such evidence as will confirm my conjectures; and it is my purpose to go to charge Ashley with this crime, and, if possible, force a confession from him."

"Good heavens, what a villain he must be! From what Radway gathered down in Bathurst, Ashley is the terror of his whole family; and the young girl of whom you speak is treated by him with a degree of brutal harshness that is shameful."

"I shall take measures to deliver her from that," said Hunter, decisively. "I am convinced in my own mind that this young lady is my cousin, and I shall protect her from her father's wrath in future by forcing him to give her to the man she loves."

"I only hope you will succeed."

They walked on some distance in silence, when Hunter said:

"What a singular man Mr. Radway is."

Martin smiled, and replied:

"He always was an eccentric. He was educated for the ministry, and I believe was ordained; but owing to his ungainliness, and his lack of oratorical skill, he never could please an audience sufficiently to obtain a permanent location. He gave up his vocation in disgust, and has since roamed about the world, admonishing all that fall in his way, and often doing deeds of mercy which prove how good a man he is. Bad as is true as steel, and would stand by a friend to the last."

"Then I must respect him in spite of his repulsiveness; but here we are at the hotel."

When the two friends entered the brilliantly lighted mansion, Hunter walked straight forward to the gentlemen's room, too much absorbed in his own thoughts to notice what was passing around him.

But Captain Martin paused to give a second look to a young man of pleasing appearance, who was looking over the list of visitors with a most anxious expression.

He called the clerk to his side, and made several inquiries in a low tone, but the replies given seemed only to deepen the cloud upon his brow. With a sigh he turned away and said:

"I am worn out with my unsuccessful search, and I must have a good night's rest before resuming it. I will take a room here and retire at once."

"Yes, sir; better do so I should say, and to-morrow be fresh for your work. Here Joe show this gentleman to No.—. Want a fire lighted, sir?"

"No, not to-night; I shall be asleep in ten minutes," and he walked off attended by the waiter.

Martin listened with a vivid interest to this colloquy, for it struck him that he had an interest in finding out who the young stranger was. As he disappeared, the captain turned to the clerk and asked:



[FRANK SEARCHING THE VISITORS' LIST.]

What's the matter with that young fellow? He looks dreadfully worried about something."

The clerk smiled knowingly as he replied:

"He is looking for a young girl who has left her home elandestinely. He was very reticent as to her name, and would examine the visitors' list himself after inquiring if a young lady came here alone two days ago."

"Can you point the gentleman's name out to me on the list?"

"Certainly, for I have just placed the number of his room opposite it. Here it is."

Captain Martin glanced at the page, read Frank Wentworth, and exclaimed:

"Bless my soul, I thought so! Hunter—where is the gentleman that came in with me?"

"In the next room, I believe, sir."

Martin dashed into the apartment indicated, found Hunter near the entrance, and after exchanging a rapid whisper with him, the two returned to the public room just as Joe came back from showing Mr. Wentworth to his chamber.

The two gentlemen sent up their cards, with a request to see Mr. Wentworth on important business, and closely followed on the steps of their messenger.

They paused in the corridor while the man went in, and in a few moments Frank came out, in the act of putting on his coat again.

On seeing the strangers advance towards him, he said:

"Excuse me, gentlemen; I was not aware that you had come up to my room, or I should at once have invited you in. Pray come in, and if, as I hope, you have anything to tell me of the person I came hither to seek, I entreat that you will relieve my anxiety on her account at once."

"We can assure you of her safety," replied Hunter, stepping forward; "we have so much to tell you that you had better come to my room, where we shall find a good fire. Do you not remember me, Mr. Wentworth? I did not observe you when I came in to night, or I should have recognized you at once."

Frank glanced keenly at him, and said:

"I recollect you now, sir; you are the gentleman I met at Baden last summer under rather peculiar circumstances. Pardon me, Mr. Hunter, for not at once recognizing you, but I have seen so many strangers within the last year that I have grown careless about remarking faces. I am quite ready to accompany you where you can give me such information as will lead me to the person I seek."

The three walked down the corridor till Hunter

came to the door of his own apartment. "A bright fire was burning in the grate, and the gas was lighted."

The door was no sooner closed on them than Wentworth impetuously asked:

"Can you indeed tell me where I shall find a young girl who has assumed the name of Wilde? Bessie Ashley is her true name, and she is my cousin. I have come hither to find and carry her back to her home."

"I am glad we can relieve your anxiety concerning this young lady, Mr. Wentworth. Captain Martin and myself have just come from an interview with her, and I assure you we left her in the hands of those who will take the best care of her. I may as well tell you that the business which brought her hither is nearly settled, and to-morrow she has consented to return to Ashurst under the escort of Martin and myself, to which I presume yours will now be added."

Wentworth looked perplexed; he said:

"I am at a loss to know what could have taken Bessie away in such a manner. I feared that she had fled from her home to escape the persecution of her friends on my account, but you know, Mr. Hunter, that my affections are elsewhere bestowed, and I thought Bessie understood that I would never permit my uncle to carry his despotic authority to the extremity he threatened."

"I do not think that any such fear prompted Miss Wilde's flight. Pray be seated, Mr. Wentworth, for I have a long story to tell you, to which you must patiently listen. You will learn much that will astonish, and, perhaps, displease you; but the end will prove to you that the hand you really covet may yet be yours. But first tell me how long you have been in London."

"I followed Bessie in the first train after her evasion was discovered; and since my arrival in this place have spent my time in going from one hotel to another, hoping to find some trace of her."

"You failed in doing so because she found a friend in the train who took her to a private boarding house kept by his sister. We left Mrs. Radway's not more than an hour ago, and she has promised to return with us to-morrow, as I have already told you."

"I am glad to hear that she is safe; and now if you please, I will hear the mystery you hint at made clear."

"Of course. Dispose yourself to listen quietly while I explain to you how we came to know anything of Miss Wilde."

Wentworth shaded his face with his hand, and with

many varied emotions hearkened to the long story which the narrator endeavoured to abridge as much as possible.

He could scarcely bring himself to believe that Mrs. Ashley had really committed so daring a fraud, and had sustained it so successfully for so long a series of years.

Wentworth now comprehended her anxiety to force himself and Bessie into an uncongenial marriage: he understood her motives for the kindness which had brought him to his grandfather's notice and eventually made him an equal sharer in his estate, provided he made Bessie his wife.

Hunter felt tempted to reveal to him what he suspected with reference to Evelyn, but until he had seen Ashley himself, and brought home to him such proofs as he trusted would bring a confession from him, he thought it best to refrain from accusing him.

At the close of his narration Frank said:

"It is a sad story, sir, and I must pity Minny almost as much as I blame her. I have often wondered at her passionate devotion to Bessie, but this revelation explains it all. Since the true Miss Ashley is dead, you will do nothing against her, Mr. Hunter?"

"I have already pledged my word to Mrs. Ashley's daughter to be as lenient towards her as possible. My business in Ashurst is with her stepson, and not with her. I have obtained a hold over him which may enable me to serve you and the pretty gipsy I saw with you at Baden last summer, and you may feel assured that I shall use it in your favour."

"I heartily thank you, sir; if you can help me in any manner to remove Evelyn from my uncle's tyranny I shall think you the best friend either of us ever had."

"We will see what can be done when we reach the end of our journey."

Frank arose, and shaking hands with both of his new friends, said:

"That reminds me that I must sleep a few hours before setting out, for I have scarcely rested a moment since I learned Bessie's flight. In spite of the exciting narrative I have just heard, I shall sleep soundly to-night, for I am worn out both physically and mentally."

The two gentlemen he left remained long in consultation together, but they finally sought their pillows after settling the course of action which they believed would be most effective in their campaign against Leon Ashley.

(To be continued.)



[“LET ME ALONE, BOY.”]

STANLEY LOCKWOOD.

By W. E. CHADWICK.

CHAPTER I.

There, beautiful and bright he stood—

As born to rule the storm,

A creature of heroic blood,

A proud, though child-like form.

Hemans.

“HARK!” exclaimed Mr. Lockwood, rising from his chair and walking with an unsteady step to the door, which he opened with a shaking hand. “Hark! there is some one shouting from the opposite bank of the river. Light the lantern, Stanley, quick I say. What are you standing in that blast for? Give it to me, and do not keep me waiting here all night.”

Snatching the lantern from the hands of his son, he seized the tongs and tried to bring the blazing coal in contact with the wick; but though he blew his hot breath in strong gusts upon it, and produced a bright flame, his wavering hand was unable to put it through the door of the lantern. Setting down the tongs, or rather throwing them on the hearth, he swung the lantern back into the hands of his son, who immediately lighted it, closed the door, and took down his cap from the wall.

“What are you going to do with your cap, sir?” asked Mr. Lockwood.

“Going with you, sir,” firmly, but respectfully answered the boy.

“And what good are you going to do me, I want to know? The night is as dark as pitch, and the wind howling like a pack of wolves.”

“That’s the reason I want to go. It is not the first time I have been out with you when as dark as it is now!”

“True, true,” said the father, rubbing his forehead with his hands, “but if Mary wakes she will be frightened at finding herself alone.”

“She never wakes, father, and if she does, Dorothy will hear from the kitchen and come to her instantly.”

“Poor thing,” cried the father, in a softer tone, looking down upon a pale-cheeked, dark-haired little girl of about eight years old, fast asleep in a little cot in the back part of the room. “Poor thing,” repeated he, stooping over and kissing her. “What has she done that she should be cursed too?”

“Father! they are shouting again louder than ever,” said the boy. “Hark! we better start!”

“Yes—wait one moment.” He opened the door of a small cupboard in the darkest corner of the apart-

ment, and taking out a black bottle, began to pour a light-coloured fluid into a glass.

He was just putting it to his lips when Stanley stepped quickly up, and laying his hand on his arm exclaimed:

“No, father, you must not drink that now. You cannot ferry the boat steadily if you do, and the wind is so strong.”

“Let me alone, boy. What right have you to prevent me? Let me alone, I say.”

“Please, father. It’s wrong, you don’t know what you are doing. You just now said she was cursed—you know you did—and yet you are going—Nay, father, you shall not drink that before you start.”

The resolute boy snatched the glass from his father’s hand and dashed the contents into the fire. A sudden blaze flashed through the room, producing a pale blue flame curling upwards. Then darting through the door, the boy waved his lantern in the air, and gave the peculiar halloo of the boatman to indicate to the waiting travellers that the ferry-boat was about to cross the river. Mr. Lockwood would have wrestled with a man who endeavoured to deprive him of the burning beverage by which he sought to stimulate his dulled and exhausted spirits, yet yielded to the bold will of a boy of fourteen without daring to resist, and followed him muttering, not loudly, but deeply, out of the cabin.

Stanley hoisted the lantern on a slight post that was elevated at the end of the boat, but so as not to interfere with the entrance of carriages, and, seizing one pole, gave the other, without speaking, into his father’s hands.

The river had a strong, rapid current, so that they were obliged to go up the stream some distance before they were able to cross it. The lantern threw a red light on the dark water, over which the boat glided heavily and sullenly. Mr. Lockwood emulated the vigorous strokes of the pole which was plied by the youthful arm of his son. He did not speak, for he was angry and ashamed; yet with his anger and shame an exulting pride was mingled. He was proud of the boy who dared to control his brutal appetite and save him momentarily from a yet deeper degradation. As he looked upon his slight figure thrown back, standing out in the glare of the lantern’s light, while he pressed the pole with all his strength against the rushing water, and thought what he might have made of him, and what his probable destiny was, he could not suppress a groan of remorse.

“You are tired, father,” said Stanley. “But never mind,” he added, in an encouraging tone “we shall

soon be over, and won’t have to tug so hard coming back.” One would have supposed that he was the elder and the stronger of the two to hear his inspiring tone.

“This is a sorry life we lead,” said the father, speaking for the first time since the rebellious act of Stanley. “Obliged to be called out like a dog, in the darkest night and the roughest winds, for anybody and everybody. I don’t mind it in the daytime, but when the heavens scowl as black as they do now, and the water looks like ink beneath us, I feel as if I were on the gloomy Styx.”

“I like it better in the night, father. It is so much more exciting—I don’t care how dark it is. We can turn the boat into a comet, and send out a long red streamer that looks grandly enough behind us. As for the wind, the stronger the better. I love to hear the river roar after us—it sounds like music to me. Hoorah, father! here we are, and here is a carriage waiting for us sure enough.”

The rough grinding sound of the boat upon the gravelly bank, and a sudden jerk which almost threw Mr. Lockwood from his feet, but which Stanley bore without a vibration, gave notice to the occupants of the carriage that the ferry was ready for them to cross. The horses came slowly and lightly reined down the steep bank, and stepped with thundering hoofs on the wet planks of the boat, which pushed off the moment the wheels rolled from the sand. A gentleman and lady were in the carriage, and the lady leaned on the shoulder of the gentleman as if feeble and wary. She was wrapped up daintily in rich shawls, and blankets were placed in the bottom of the carriage to cover her feet. There was a young girl, too, on the front seat, but her outline was scarcely distinguishable amid the dark shadows of the night. When the boat was about halfway over the river the horses began to be restive, and to step backwards and forwards, much to the alarm of the lady. Lifting her languid head from her husband’s shoulder, she insisted upon getting out of the carriage.

“There is no danger, Eliza,” said her husband. “Keep quiet, and do not expose yourself to taking cold by this needless alarm.”

But even while he was speaking the horses went back still farther, though the driver stood at their head with a controlling arm. Forgetting her fatigue and debility the lady jumped out, while her husband, finding it in vain to reason with her, followed, and taking one of the blankets threw it on the bottom of the boat for her to stand on, and gathered her shawl round her, which the strong winds were filling like the sails of a ship.

"Look, husband," she whispered, "look at that boy, what a beautiful face and figure he has!"

Stanley was standing with his right hand grasping the long pole by which he was propelling the boat, while with his left he pushed back the locks that were blowing over his temples. The blaze of the lantern fell full upon him, and lighted him up with a pale glory, while the thick shadows all settled behind him in a kind of rich Rembrandt background. Though he had been recklessly, fearlessly exposed to the sun and the wind, regardless of their bronzing influence, his cheek and brow were as fair as a girl's; and his hair, too, long and curling, floated back from his forehead with a wild grace and glossiness, as if born to sport with the river breeze that so often wanted with its profusion. His eyes were of a clear deep cerulean blue, with very dark lashes, and his finely formed eyebrows were also of a much darker hue than his hair. His mouth, beautiful as the Apollo Belvidere's, had also the slightly scornful expression that curls the parted lip of the young divinity.

He certainly was a very remarkable looking boy for a ferryman's son, and the lady forgot her alarm while gazing upon him, and the gentleman his fears for the lady. He was struck with the mind, the spirit which breathed from that boyish face—the with the striking beauty of its features—both with the contrast he presented to the rude occupation in which he was engaged.

The boy caught their earnest gaze, and turning, with a quick deep blush, again bent over the pole, which began to dip in a deeper, stronger current. When they reached the opposite bank, the lady and gentleman held a low conversation, and then the gentleman, turning courteously to Mr. Lockwood, asked him if he knew of any house of entertainment near, where they could pass the night, as Mrs. Hasselton was very much fatigued and unwilling to travel farther in the darkness.

"There is no house within several miles," answered Mr. Lockwood, "and the roads are very bad, and there is a very steep hill to go up before you reach the nearest habitation."

"What shall I do?" exclaimed the lady, looking anxiously at the log cabin before them. "I cannot, I dare not, travel farther to-night; cannot this good man give us a bed?"

"I am very sorry, madam," replied Mr. Lockwood, with much more politeness of manner than they expected from a ferryman. "I really am not able to offer you any suitable accommodation. My cabin is too rough and ill-furnished to ask you to sit down in, much less to sleep in."

"I don't care for accommodations," she cried earnestly. "No matter how rough the bed, how coarse the fare, I will not complain, but I cannot ride with those wild horses any farther this dark night."

"The horses are not wild, Eliza," said her husband with a smile. "They are very safe and manageable; but I know you are a coward and cannot help it. If our good boatman here is willing to take us in for the night, I shall certainly be under an obligation to him for your sake?"

"If I had a bed," stammered Lockwood, ashamed and vexed at his poverty, well knowing that it was the curse he had drawn upon himself, and that he too had once eaten the bread of affluence.

"Let us give them our bed, father," said Stanley in a low voice, approaching close to his father, "we can sleep upon the floor."

"I am sorry to put you to inconvenience, my fine boy," replied Mr. Hasselton, "but I thank you very much for your obliging offer. I know Mrs. Hasselton will not refuse it."

Stanley did not like being called a "fine boy" by the rich man whom he was about to accommodate. It sounded too patronizing. He did not mean that he should hear the offer.

He wanted his father to have the credit, if credit there was, of which he was not at all convinced. He knew what was due to the stranger within one's gates, as well as to the children of the wealthy; and there was something about the lady so sweet and winning, her slightest request seemed clothed with the absoluteness of command. He led the way to the cabin, holding his lantern low so as to illumine the ground where the lady stepped. When they entered there was certainly nothing very inviting in the aspect of those unplastered walls, and that poorly-furnished room, to the eye of the delicate and weary traveller; but it was a place of safety, and it was certainly preferable to the danger of bad roads, fiery horses, and a night of ink darkness. The only chairs that were visible were wooden frames with untanned leather bottoms, and a low bedstead covered with a blue and white woollen counterpane, which looked hard and repulsive. Still there was an air of neatness, and even of comfort, about the place. There were curtains to the lower

part of the windows, which, though made of white dimity, were perfectly neat, and the pillow cases and all of the sheets that were visible were of snowy purity.

Mrs. Hasselton sat on the side of the bed while the girl brought in her blankets, and kneeling down spread one beneath her feet on the uncarpeted floor. Stanley thought the lady's feet must be very dainty things, since they were not allowed to press anything harder than wool; and he thought too how many there were who would be thankful to have those soft nice blankets to cover them and shield their bodies from the cold. He threw some logs on the dying embers of the hearth, which soon kindling, a flood of radiance went rolling over the dark walls, converting them for a time into an illuminated dome. The beams overhead being unfloored, the eye could travel upwards to the apex of the roof, so that there was an illusion of loftiness given to the building, low and confined as it was.

Mr. Hasselton, who had been with Mr. Lockwood to arrange in some way for the accommodation of his horses and the driver, now entered with the master of the house, and drawing a chair towards the fire, appeared to receive fresh spirit from the influence of the cheering blaze.

He was a fine, benevolent-looking man, with a kindness and heartiness of manner which even Lockwood could not resist.

He seemed so well satisfied with the accommodations offered, so sorry for the trouble they were giving, that it was impossible to grudge a hospitality so gratefully received and so urgently required.

The magnificent fireworks in the chimney threw every object out in strong relief, and even suffused with a glow the fair pale face of the weary lady who, half-reclining on the bed supported by her elbow, suffered her eyes to wander over the group round the fire, though it rested with increasing interest on the remarkable looking boy who stood beside her husband with the air of a young aristocrat, in spite of his common apparel.

She looked from him to his father, on whose brow the unmistakable seal of intemperance was stamped, —that mark of sin and shame, which grows broader and deeper till the image of God is utterly defaced. He might once have been a handsome man; for his forehead was lofty, and his features symmetrical, but his eyes had a pale watery lustre, and his face was bloated and discoloured.

He was now, however, perfectly sober, thanks to the bold interference of his dauntless boy before they left the cabin, and as he sat conversing with Mr. Hasselton the latter was astonished at the ease and refinement of his language.

By certain classic allusions he soon discovered that he had had a college education, and also learned that he had known some of the most distinguished men of the day—and yet he was located on the banks of that wild stream among the Welsh mountains, in an obscure log cabin, lonely and poor, a common ferryman, and was bringing up his noble boy for the same inglorious occupation.

These things troubled the benevolent Mr. Hasselton, and he longed to fathom their mystery.

In the meantime another figure was added to the group, and a very important one in the ferryman's cabin.

It was old Dorothy, the only servant that remained with the family which she endeavoured to retrieve in the dignity of her single person.

She had a great deal of family pride, for she was one of those attached domestics now so seldom met with, who look upon themselves as a part of the family they serve.

She had been the nurse of his children, and for two or three years had watched over their desolate and orphaned childhood with the tenderness and devotion of a mother. When Mrs. Lockwood was on her deathbed, where a broken heart had laid her, she bound her husband, then awakened to a remorseful consciousness of the fatal consequences of his degeneracy, by a solemn promise, never to part with this faithful and attached creature.

"All the rest are gone," said the dying mother. "The whole household is scattered and broken up—Dorothy alone remains, she loves my poor children, and will be a mother to them when I am gone. Promise me, as you hope for comfort and pardon in your last moments, never to give up this their last friend, their only stay."

Mr. Lockwood, in an agony of remorse, promised all she required, and the faithful servant declared that she would spill every drop of her heart's blood sooner than separate from the children she loved better than her own life. From that moment she devoted herself to their interests with a fidelity that never wavered, and an affection that never abated. There was no sacrifice too great for her comfort, or too mighty for her love. And there she now stood,

with her hands folded over her clean, white apron, as on a comfortable little shelf, curtsying to the strange lady with respectful lowliness. She had evidently prepared herself for the occasion, and looked as if she were conscious of bearing on her shoulders the few remaining honours of the house of Lockwood.

It must be acknowledged that poor Dorothy had one fault that grew into a kind of monomania. In her desire to conceal the position to which her master was reduced, she indulged in a spirit of exaggeration which increased upon her unconsciously. She actually began to believe herself in the existence of those resources which her imagination supplied, she had so often had recourse to them in the day of trouble.

Mrs. Hasselton felt nearly as much surprise to see this very respectable housekeeper-looking woman a member of the family as the fair-haired boy she admired so much, and acknowledged her lowly greeting with a gentle curtsy that took captive at once old Dorothy's susceptible heart.

"What would the lady like for her supper?" she asked, turning up her eyes as if endeavouring to recollect the many luxuries with which she could supply her. "I haven't been cook in master's family these twelve years for nothing."

An arch smile flattered over the rosy lips of Stanley as he listened to Dorothy's grandiloquent exhibition of hospitality, knowing what a poor supper she really would be obliged to prepare for the appetite of the travellers.

"Thank you," replied Mrs. Hasselton, "I will not trouble you for anything but a cup of tea. We all have eaten quite lately in the carriage, and are not hungry in the least. You know travellers always carry their luncheon with them."

"Yes, ma'am, I know that," answered Dorothy, inexpressibly relieved; "when my poor dear mistress used to go a-journeying, I always put a basket in the carriage filled with sandwiches and cake, and wine, and all manner of dainties. Well, I'll go and make a cup of gunpowder tea, and serve it up for you with loaf sugar and cream."

It was not long before Dorothy reappeared with a waiter from which the japan had partially disappeared, a cup of common white crockeryware, and a little blue bowl with brown sugar, instead of the white crystal she had promised to serve. Going up to Mrs. Hasselton, with as much ceremony as if she were in a fashionable drawing-room, she apologized for every deficiency with a grace and readiness that left no room for doubt.

"I am very sorry, my lady, and ashamed too, to offer you this sort of sugar; but we are quite out of the white, and, ma'am, this is such an out-of-the-way place, we see so little company."

"Dorothy has mounted her hobby-horse," I see," said Mr. Lockwood, observing Mr. Hasselton and his wife exchange a benevolent smile while his cook was expatiating over her cup of black tea and brown sugar. "I must, however, do her the justice to say, that whatever may be her present position, she once was familiar with the luxuries of which she boasts."

"Take away the waiter; don't you see the lady has put her cup back?"

Mrs. Hasselton tried to sip the beverage so kindly prepared for her, but her utmost efforts only enabled her to take a few sips.

Dorothy was distressed because "the cat had stolen the nice cream that would have made it so good;" and she was equally distressed "that her beautiful counterpane was in the wash, and that the lady would have to sleep on that rough covering."

Mrs. Hasselton assured her on that point, that it was of no consequence, as she only wished to recline on the outside of the bed wrapped in her shawl, to be ready for a very early ride in the morning.

"But who is that little creature in the other bed?" said she, starting, for she had not observed before that it had an occupant.

Now the firelight played laughingly on little Mary's round, but colourless cheeks and dark hair, which lay loose upon the pillow.

"Let me bless your heart, my lady, it's my own blessed child that I weaned right out of its mother's arms. And so I did young master there, and since their own mother died, my poor dear mistress, I haven't lived for anything else in the world but them children, and I shall live for them till the Lord please to take me home to my blessed husband that's now in glory, the Lord have mercy on his soul!"

Mrs. Hasselton was so much interested in the sleeping child that she walked across the room, and gazed on its infantine features, to the delight of the affectionate Dorothy.

"Oh! ma'am," continued she in the abundance of her affection, "their children is very dear to me; if they were my own born and raised I could not think more of them. My poor mistress made me promise just before she died never to leave or forsake her little ones; and if never will as long as one foot can trot

after the other. No; as long as poor Dorothy has a mouthful of bread as big as a barleycorn," added she, forgetting her vain boasting in the pure reality of her affection, "she'll break it with them blessed children."

Wiping a tear from her eye, with the corner of her white, starched apron, she stroked back the child's dishevelled hair, and smoothed the sheet carefully over the counterpane.

"They are both beautiful children," replied Mrs. Hasselton, looking from the placid face of the sleeper to the little ferryman near the fire. "How long is it since their mother died?"

"Just two years, and six months next Sabbath evening at half-past eleven o'clock," then lowering her voice, so that her master and Mr. Hasselton, who were engaged in earnest conversation, could not hear her. "That was an awful night, it was. I never shall forget it in all my born days. I thought master would have gone distracted; sure enough he went raving about the room, and striking his head with his clenched hands, and if it hadn't been for that trouble, he would never have seen this poor place. We couldn't stay there no more, so he sold everything he had, and came off like St. Bartholomew in the wilderness, to live, as it were, on the locusses and wild honey."

The lady, though she was much interested in the history of the orphan children, and touched by the devotion of the faithful servant, felt very weary and anxious to resume her reclining position.

The young girl was already fast asleep, and Stanley, wrapping himself in a blanket that Dorothy brought from the kitchen, soon slept as soundly as if lying on a bed of down.

Mrs. Hasselton, overcome by fatigue, suffered her head to fall entirely back on the pillow, whose clean surface she did not shrink from pressing, and she also soon lost all consciousness of surrounding objects.

Dorothy retired to the kitchen, rejoicing that she had not been obliged to commit the honour of the family by getting a supper which would have shamed her cookery and the former grandeur of the house.

All slept but Mr. Hasselton and his host, who sat smoking their cigars and conversing with earnest interest by the lightwood blaze.

Smoking was a luxury in which Mr. Hasselton indulged to some extent, and as he never travelled without a well-furnished cigar-case, he was able to supply his host on this occasion with a similar means of enjoyment.

"I am astonished," said Mr. Hasselton, continuing the conversation, now audible in the stillness of the apartment, "I am astonished that a man of your natural and cultivated powers of mind can settle down in this obscure spot, lost to mankind and lost to himself. Pardon me if I speak too plainly, but I cannot help it. A man is never lost while conscious of his degenerate condition. If not for your own sake, for the sake of your children, arouse yourself and be a man again. Why, this boy of yours is the finest child I ever saw in my life. To put him in a ferry-boat, and throw all his energies into that long pole he grasps with such a princely air, when by education he might be made such an ornament to the world, is a crime in the sight of God and man."

"Alas! what else can I do with him now? I have wasted the property that might have been his. I have forfeited the confidence and respect of society. I have made myself a byword and reproach among men. I came here that I might hide myself from every eye that knew me in the days that were mine before the tempter found this burning plague-spot in my heart and blew upon it with his breath of flame."

"You have but to make a solemn resolution never to taste another drop of the poison—to do as thousands have done before you, and be saved," cried Mr. Hasselton, shaking the ashes from his cigar in an energetic manner. "You are still in the prime and vigour of your days. You can resume your station in society. You can give your children the blessings of civilized and social life."

"Look at this tremulous hand," said Mr. Lockwood, holding up the half-palmed member, "and see what a wreck my nervous system now is. I might have reformed years ago, but now it is too late. Every energy of body and mind is fast wasting away. I cannot live without the excitement of drink. I must drink to appease the gnawings of remorse—to drown the scorpions of avenging conscience—drink to forget that I broke the heart of my wife, beggared my children, and wasted my estate—drink to forget that I have sold myself body and soul to the arch-tempter of mankind."

"Well, drink as much as you please, but let it be cold water—pure crystal water from the spring. Promise me, if you have one remnant of manhood left, that you will not taste another drop of alcohol. If you will, I will do something for that boy of yours. If I had such a son I would not take a million ingots of gold for him. He must be educated. How can you

sit down and give yourself up to perdition without one spark of pride for your children, or one feeling of respect for yourself, is astonishing, astounding, incomprehensible. By heaven, the mania, chained to his dungeon walls, is a sane man to you!"

"I know it—I feel it," cried the wretched man, "but I've made so many resolutions and broken them all. I'm afraid to promise. I have tried—heaven knows I have—but it is all in vain. You think I don't love my children. I would throw myself into the flames this moment if it would do them any good. I would be torn into atoms by wild beasts to save them one pang. And yet—"

"You cannot give up the suicidal habit of drinking," interrupted Mr. Hasselton.

"Alas! no—some demon stands at my elbow and urges me on, though I know that every step brings me nearer to the brink of ruin."

Here he leaned his head on his hand, and wept and sobbed in the impotence of unavailing remorse.

"Heaven help you, poor man! and heaven help your poor children!" exclaimed Mr. Hasselton, too much moved to remain still in his chair, and rising; he walked the room with troubled steps.

His heart yearned over the sleeping children, doomed to an orphanage, more sad than that created by death itself. He yearned too over the helpless man who seemed wrapped in the lightning coils of a hydra whose blood is gall and whose breath is fire. He stopped at the side of the slumbering boy, on whose placid brow a heaven-born smile was lingering, as if it had been fanned by an angel's wing.

"And this boy must live under this doom," cried he bitterly. "Oh! miserable infatuation—unparalleled madness!"

"I will try once more," cried the weeping inebriate. "I will try for the sake of that boy and my poor little motherless Mary. I thank you for the interest you have taken in me. If I had known you a little sooner I might perhaps have been saved; but friends looked coldly on me, neighbours passed me by on the other side—even my wife turned from me in loathing. Poor soul, she could not help it—no, she could not. I thought I was lost and plunged deeper and deeper, trying to annihilate myself. But there is something here that is undying," cried he, snatching his breast with his hand. "There is a fire that is unquenchable. The word of heaven is true! Yes, let heaven be true though every man be a liar."

"I shall be travelling this way again in about six months," said Mr. Hasselton, trying to speak calmly. "In the meantime, abstain from the poison that is consuming you, and if I then find you are trying to help yourself and family, I will see what I can do for you, and will assist in the education of your children."

Mr. Lockwood renewed the oft-repeated and oft-broken promise of abstinence, with an earnest resolution of amendment; and Mr. Hasselton, gratified at obtaining this victory, and hoping he would have strength to keep his word inviolate, lay down on the couch and fell into the calm slumbers of an untroubled bosom. Mr. Lockwood could not sleep. The stings of an awakened conscience, and the terrible gnawings of unsatisfied appetite, would not let him rest. Crouching by the hearth, he gazed on the little cupboard which contained the fluid which had turned his blood to fire, and for which he was craving with insane, irresistible desire; then looking on the calm sleepers, he said to himself he might taste, and they would never know. His bold boy would not dash the glass aside from his grasping hand, and his new friend's admonishing voice was silent now.

Stealing darkly towards the corner, he opened the door and laid his hand upon the bottle.

"I have promised," he said, pausing and trembling. "The breath is not yet dry upon my lips. I have promised once again, and shall I break my oath this very night, this hour, this moment? Oh! merciful Father!" he exclaimed, sinking on his knees, and holding up his trembling hands to heaven. "Holy Spirit, whom I have insulted and injured, forsake me not in this my extremity. Give me strength to wrestle with my indwelling sin. Take away the curse from me and my children."

Before the rising of the small was life and bustle in the cabin. The travellers were anxious to commence their journey at the earliest possible hour, and old Dorothy, finding that they were resolved to start before breakfast, and thus knowing that the credit of the family was safe, gave a glowing description of the luxuries she had intended to place before them. Little Mary gazed with surprise and alarm on the strange faces that met her waking eyes, but there was something so kind and reassuring in their countenances, that she soon glided to the side of the lady, and even played with the rings that glittered on her snowy fingers.

Mrs. Hasselton, who had no children of her own, felt irrepressible tenderness for this motherless child

confided to the care of an evidently inebriate father and an ignorant servant who, however, faithful and affectionate, was incapacitated by her darkened intellect from bestowing that moral and mental culture on the child which her dawning years demanded.

There was something peculiar in the face of little Mary—peculiar for a child in any situation, but especially in hers.

A pensive, even melancholy, expression, and a total absence of colour, gave her a look of refinement more interesting than mere rosy, joyous beauty. Her eyes were blue—of a darker hue than her brother's, but their lashes were of raven blackness, and her eyebrows and hair were exceedingly dark. Dorothy had arrayed her in her best frock and apron, and brushed her hair till it looked glossy as the wing of a bird; and when a child feels she has her best dress on, no matter what that dress may be, the costliest silk or the cheapest calico, the association is the same, and all the self-respect which external circumstances can give her elevates her spirits.

It was this consciousness of looking her best that gave her confidence to caress Mrs. Hasselton's gem-decorated hand, and peep into her pale face with those eyes that resembled the violet in colour and their natural bending towards the earth.

"You are a very sweet little girl," said the kind-hearted lady, putting her arm caressingly around her.

"Whom do you love best?"

"Stanley and Dorothy—and father too," answered the child.

"Stanley is very kind to you, is he not? He is a good brother I know."

"Oh, yes, ma'am," replied Mary, with a fervour that changed the whole expression of her features; "he is so good—you don't know how good he is! He saves all the money he gets, and puts it in a little box with a hole in the top, where it can't come out again, for me when I get big enough to go to school. I can read now—he taught me himself, and reads books to me every night."

"Does he go to school, my child?"

"No, ma'am, but father teaches him. Father is a great scholar, and knows everything. Brother Stanley can read Latin and Greek too, and father says he will be a great man some time."

"But how does your brother earn money?" asked the lady, urged by a better motive than idle curiosity.

They happened to be alone at this moment, as all were busy in preparations for their departure.

"He catches fish and sells them, and sometimes the gentlemen that cross in the boat give him money; and he makes little willow-baskets at night, and Dorothy carries them a long way off and sells them for him. But you mustn't tell of that—please don't!" added the child, lowering her voice. "He don't want it known, 'cause he says it's girl-work. I help him make them too. Dorothy keeps the box for us, and puts some in it herself."

"And how does she earn money in a place like this, and what is she going to do with it? Help send you to school?"

"Yes, ma'am—that's what she does it for. She takes in sewing, all she can get, though that ain't much, we live so far off. Morgan brings work to her."

"And who is Morgan?"

"Don't you know Morgan? asked the child in an accent of astonishment. "He comes to see Dorothy, and he's so good—he's lame and goes with a crutch, and he's old too, and has not much money, but he gives us some for all that."

"But your father, my dear child—your father puts money in your little box, too, does he not?"

"Father never has any money to put anywhere," replied little Mary, a shade of inexpressible melancholy stealing over her sweet countenance.

Mrs. Hasselton felt that she had arrived at a point where it would be sacrilege to go farther. The vices of a parent must be sacred ground to an innocent child, and never invaded by others in their presence; but she knew little Mary must be aware of the appropriation of her father's money, and that young as she was, she mourned over his degradation and its awful consequences.

"Will you tell your brother to come, and see me a few minutes before I go? I want to speak with him."

Away Mary flew, and soon returned, followed by Stanley, whose face reflected the radiance of the rising day. He stood before her, a modest blush glowing on his cheek. "You were so very kind and considerate as to give up your bed and sleep on the hard floor," said Mrs. Hasselton. "I owe you some return; what can I do for you?"

"Nothing, ma'am, I am sure I hope you don't think I did it in the thought of being paid. Besides, it's father's bed, not mine. If anybody is to be thanked, it's he, not I, ma'am."

It was very strange, but this rich and high-bred lady felt embarrassed at the thought of offering

money to the son of the poor ferryman. She felt afraid of offending the innate nobility of soul which gave such intelligence and spirit to his whole countenance. She had drawn a sovereign from her purse, but hesitated in what manner to present it. At length she said, while a slight colour mantled on her delicate cheek:

"Your little sister tells me that you are very good to her, and are saving up all your money for her use. Will you add this to her little store, and remember too, that you have friends now who will always be interested in your welfare?"

"Thank you, ma'am," said Stanley, receiving the golden coin with a bright blush, and bowing low as he took it from that beautiful jewelled hand. "You have given it to her, and I must not refuse it. But we've done nothing to deserve it. It is all your gift, and a generous one, I'm sure?"

"Don't you desire to go to school yourself?" asked Mrs. Hasselton. "You will not be contented to stay here and row a ferry-boat much longer. You ought not, you were made for something better. Have you no relations that can assist you?"

"Not that I know, ma'am. I do desire to go to school; I feel as if I should some day, but I could not leave my father now; he could not get on without me; he instructs me, too, when he is well enough."

He paused with painful confusion, and then continued:

"My father takes great delight in giving me lessons when he has time: he has a good many books which I love to read. See here, ma'am," said he, drawing aside a little calico curtain over the fireplace, and exhibiting several rows of classic volumes. "These are my treasures; we had a large library once, but these are all that are left. Contented!" repeated he, his lips curling with that peculiar curve she had admired so much the night before. "Oh! no, ma'am—don't think I am contented here."

"You ought not to be," said the lady rising and folding her shawl more closely round her, for she heard the rumbling of the carriage wheels approaching the door: "you must think of me sometimes, and remember what I have said to you."

"Think of you!" exclaimed the boy, with fervid, enthusiastic gratitude. "Oh, madam, how could I ever forget you?"

The gentleness, kindness, and condescension of this beautiful lady opened a fount of sensibility in the young heart of Stanley that was never again sealed. She appeared in that rude cabin like an angel visitant, a messenger of mercy bearing tidings from a fairer, purer world.

He felt that he was of a kindred nature, that it was for such fellowship he was created, and he made a vow to himself that he would prove worthy of the interest he had excited in her.

He would strive and toil and struggle as never boy yet toiled and struggled, with an opposing destiny till he had won back that position in society his father had forfeited.

All this flashed through the brain of the high-reaching boy, and gave extraordinary animation to his countenance. The lady kissed the round cheek of Mary, and held out her hand to the boy in token of farewell, then yielding to an irresistible impulse she bent down and kissed his forehead.

Stanley felt as if his mother had come down from heaven, and breathed her balmy breath upon his brow. The grace, the tenderness of the action swelled his very soul.

It was so long since he had felt such a dear caress. It hallowed him, it set him apart as something holy; it filled him with divine aspirations; tears gushed from his eyes, and ashamed of his weakness he darted through a back door, and plunged into the thicket of pine trees that sheltered the cabin.

Mrs. Hasselton turned to the opposite door, with glistening eyes, where she encountered Dorothy, who had come to take an elaborate farewell. She pressed in her hand a generous token of remembrance, which the good woman in her honest pride was ashamed to receive.

"Ah, my lady, it's a shame, I'm sure, to take so much for nothing at all. If it had been any other time, I could have served you up something delicate for breakfast. Then the bed never was so coarse, and all the nice linen in the wash, but you'll excuse it, my lady, and the Lord bless and preserve you, and give you a merciful deliverance to your journey's end."

Dorothy had a habit of winding up her best speeches with quotations from Scripture, for the sake of effect, and though they were sometimes rather obscure, and perverted from their original meaning, they were not without point or expression.

"I respect you for your kindness to those children," said the lady, with a sweet smile. "Continue to be as kind and good to them, and heaven will reward you, Dorothy."

"Oh! I try to do my duty to them children; heaven knows it's all I live and prays for!"

Dorothy was now sobbing outright in the corner of her apron, for Mrs. Hasselton had touched the soft porous part of her heart, that was always saturated with tears that oozed out at the slightest pressure.

"Eliza, my dear," said Mr. Hasselton, taking her hand to lead her to the carriage, "we are all ready; the horses seem very gentle, so do not be alarmed."

"I do not fear by daylight when you are near me," replied she, taking her seat on the crimson cushions that were gathered from all parts of the carriage round her.

Mr. Hasselton shook hands with Mr. Lockwood, with whom he had just held another long and interesting conversation, and with a hearty "God bless you!" took his place by the side of his wife.

"I feel quite out of my province in a carriage," said Mr. Hasselton, trying to settle himself in the midst of the bundles and carpet bags and the feet of the girl on the opposite seat. "Give me the back of the horse and the open air; but my wife would have my company, and I was obliged to obey. Drive on, Thomas, and remember whom you are carrying."

The carriage rolled along. Mr. Lockwood stood rooted to the spot where they had left him, all the remnant goodness of his nature roused to action by coming into collision with one so noble and generous. Dorothy gazed after them, while little Mary raised herself on tiptoe to catch one more glimpse of the glittering wheels. But none gazed with the same intense feelings as swelled the heart of the boy who had sought the deep pine grove to hide his gushing tears.

(To be continued.)

FOOTMARKS IN THE SNOW.

CHAPTER I.

THE winter of 1798 was a severe one, and the snow lay thick and heavy in the old forest of Eitenheim; but for all that the little cottage of the forest-keeper looked snug and comfortable, and his young and pretty wife, Leticia, moved airily about, like a bird in its nest.

The door suddenly opened, and a rough, uncouth looking man, wearing a coarse frock, high leather leggings and a furry cap, and carrying a gun in his hand, entered.

He was large in stature and vigorous in action, yet, for all his uncouthness, there was a look of genial good-nature on his weather-beaten features. This was Conrad Rolfe the head game-keeper of the forest. He caught his little wife in his arms, and kissed her in a hearty, boisterous manner.

"That's what is called quick firing, and no waste of powder!" he laughingly exclaimed. "Ah, you little rogue, you did not expect me? Of course not—so I will tell you all about it; but first, I'll put down my gun." He placed his gun down carefully beside the fireplace. "My hands are as cold as—rub them a little will you?"

He extended two great, rough, red hands towards her, which she chafed with her own, making them look still whiter by the contrast, and all the while he smiled upon her, looking like a good-natured bear being petted.

"Ha!" he cried, with satisfaction, "this is more pleasant than lying in the snow, watching the old wolf! I never told you about him, did I? Well, last night, as it had snowed hard all day, I gave a rendezvous to my brother keepers, for the purpose of turning out a wolf that had been lurking for some time past by the old stone cross in the forest."

"But, Conrad, what made you return so unexpectedly?" asked Leticia, with a strangely embarrassed air.

"I'll tell you. Do you know, Leticia, I have been doing nothing all night but look in the air and watch but one object, and I believe I should have been looking at it still, if my comrade, Paul, had not said, 'Why, Conrad, what are you looking at?—do you expect to find the old wolf perched on a tree like a crow?' Ah, he little knew what I was thinking of and looking at!"

"What was it, Conrad?"

"Why, I was thinking of you. And our cottage is so situated that at the end of each angle in the forest I could see a lamp burning in the little window."

"A—lamp!" stammered Leticia, though what there was in that simple circumstance to cause her apprehension was not apparent.

"And, thought I to myself," pursued Conrad, entirely oblivious of her agitation, "beside that lamp is my dear little wife, watching and waiting for me. She has got ready a good fire on the hearth, a good soup in the pot, warmth and comfort, food and fire, all to welcome my return. I could resist no longer—so I told my men to pass down by the thicket, and

wait for me at the pond, whilst I ran home to my wife. I know who has the best bargain."

"But, Conrad, you must remember your rendezvous," exclaimed Leticia, anxiously.

"Ah, the pond! Of course, but they can wait."

"Wait! in this frost and snow."

"I don't feel it, do I?" laughed Conrad. "Here's a famous fire! Besides, it's their duty—am I not the head-keeper? And though the Revolution has made us all equals, and I venerate equality, they must not forget they are my inferiors; so, as I said before, let them wait. Why, before I was a public functionary, I did nothing but watch and wait over the sleep of a marchioness, and all for what? She knew nothing of domestic happiness, not a bit! No sooner do I see my dear little wife, than I run to her arms and—"

Suiting the action to the word, he caught her in his arms and was about to imprint a kiss upon her rosy lips, when a thin-faced, cold-looking little man opened the door and came into the cottage.

"I beg pardon," he stammered, perceiving the situation; "I'll come some other time."

"What for?" shouted Conrad. "Stay where you are." He deliberately kissed Leticia. "Our business is finished. Why, Gamard, what has brought you out of your bed so early? Not to bring me home my new coat?"

"Oh, bless you, no!" answered Gamard, the little man being the village tailor. "The coat is at a stand-still—my business is at a stand-still—every thing is at a stand-still."

"Why neighbour, what is the matter with you?"

"Excuse me," returned the tailor, glancing at Conrad and then at his wife in a very mysterious manner, "but what I have to impart is of a peculiar nature; and can only be confided to one of the male sex. I need scarcely remind you that your wife is not a male."

"Bo!" cried Conrad. Then he whispered to his wife, "Go to your room, Leticia. I'll soon send him and his story packing."

"And your appointment—don't forget that," she whispered back; and she added aloud to Gamard, "Pray don't detain my husband—his comrades are waiting for him."

It almost seemed as if she was anxious to get her husband out of the house; but Conrad had no suspicion of this, as he watched her with honest admiration as she withdrew into an inner apartment.

He placed chairs by the fire, and invited Gamard to be seated, and when they had made themselves comfortable, he said:

"Now neighbour, what do you want with me?"

"Everybody knows about here," began Gamard, mysteriously, "that you are the chief forest-keeper. Now as such, you understand the way of catching obnoxious and unpleasant animals, and as I know how clever you are at catching all kind of reptiles, I want you to invent a snare for me."

"A snare! What, to protect your fowls and rabbits?"

"Rabbits! No; I want to protect my wife!"

"Your wife?" repeated Conrad, opening his eyes in astonishment.

"Yes; and I want a trap—a man-trap."

"You are trifling with me?"

"I am not. I will explain. You must know that all my life I have been blessed with as good alumbars as any man. Well, for the last month a cold in my head has made me very restless, and I have been tossed about like a pancake, when—what do you think I have observed?"

"I cannot guess."

"Why, the moment daylight appears, or even before, my wife, thinking me asleep, up she gets, dresses herself, goes out, and leaves me in a state of the most profuse perspiration between the sheets."

"Well, what does she do, then?"

"That's just what I want to know. In about an hour back she comes, shuts the door, gets into bed, chilly as an icicle, and makes my teeth chatter with cold and indignation. Yesterday morning I could stand it no longer. So when she got up, thinking I was asleep, up I got, too, and followed her, all the way to her respectable grandmother's, and who should I find there but her Cousin Jean. I burst into the room, and was about to overwhelm Cousin Jean with a torrent of indignation, when she coolly told me not, as she had merely come there for some herbs to make a drink for a cold in her head. Do you mean to tell me that my wife would leave her warm bed, of a cold, frosty morning, for herb-drink? It's my private belief that she went there expressly to see Cousin Jean. What would you do in such a case?"

"The next time she gets up, watch her closely—follow her—lay in wait for her—track her steps, softly, and on tiptoe, as though you followed a wolf—and having followed—having traced her, if you prove her false—"

"Well, what then?"

"What then?" cried Conrad, springing to his feet; "do you need to be told? Shake her off—leave her to her falsehood! Take to a soldier's coat!"

"There would be no difficulty in that," interrupted Gamard, "for I have one ready made, all but the buttons."

"Would you acknowledge a wife who had dishonoured you?" continued Conrad, excitedly. "Never! but without a word—without even seeing her, go, and seek your death in the ranks of your country."

"If you met a misfortune of this kind, would you leave your wife?"

"I would; but not until I had sent a brace of bullets through the head of her seducer."

"Ah, it is all very well for you—you are used to a gun. Now the only instrument of death I handle is a needle."

"What," resumed Conrad, who seemed strangely excited over the subject, "let that man escape who has robbed me of all my heart held dear? No! I'd shoot him like a wild beast—ay, and glory in the act that rid the world of a villain, and gave my heart revenge! The thought makes me sick, giddy, and sends the blood like fire to my brain. Gamard, never speak to me on this subject again. Come, I must return to my duty in the forest."

He snatched up his gun and hurried off, followed by the astonished tailor.

CHAPTER II.

In half an hour Conrad was back again. He found Leticia sitting in a chair before the fire. She started up at his entrance.

"Well, here I am again," he exclaimed; "and why, what has happened? You look pale and trembling. What has terrified you?"

"Nothing, Conrad, nothing," she stammered. "I have been sleeping in the chair and dreaming."

"Of some hobgoblin, I suppose. I have seen our neighbour, Gamard, safely on his road. Poor Gamard! what pains he took to be jealous. He, who is always at home nailed to his board, like a bad coin. If he were a forest-keeper, there might be some excuse, scouring the woods by night, and sleeping by day. And Gamard to be jealous of his wife! Had he married above his station he might talk. I, who married a woman superior to myself in all things."

"Conrad, how can you speak in that way?"

"You were never intended for a man like me. In this hand, this little hand, was formed to me in one less hard and rough than Conrad Rolfe's, the forest-keeper."

"And where should I have found one half so true—where found a heart that beat with half the fondness of your own? Conrad, I have placed my happiness in your charge; I wish no better lot."

"Leticia, I believe you, and will do all in my power to prevent you from regretting the past—the past that held the promise of a golden future to your young and girlish hopes. Brought up in a fine castle—nurtured as a daughter, not a dependant, of a noble house—noble! bah! times are changed—the Revolution has done its work, and levelled all distinction. But for all that, you might have mated with one of noble birth, ay, and perhaps have been the wife of that *peu de Montiel*. I never saw him, but I have heard of him, and know well enough he loved you, and you him, and—but never mind. I will not talk of the past. Yet, how can I forget it? The past, when loving you, in my despair I lived apart, and like the owl, wandered by night, alone and friendless. But the Revolution came, and made us equals—humbled the proud man, and taught the rich and great the lesson of humility. It was then when the lords of the proud house of Montiel, sons of the man who drove my father from the roof of his fathers—when their castle was the scene of outrage and pillage—then I looked up, and dared to think that she who scorned the humble forester, yet might live to love the man who rescued and protected her."

"And you protected—saved me?"

"When the people came in crowds—came with axe and brand, then came hope. I ran with them through galleries—through halls—but not to steal. My aim was to protect—to save Leticia. She fled from the scene of plunder and strife. The cellars floated with wine, and mad with drink, the crowd rushed on. Some seized on gold—on jewels—all had their prize, and so had I—I took what they had scorned—your portrait. I was happy—rich; for I held your likeness next my heart; it is here, and shall be until my death. Tired with the scene, I fled the house—passed up the avenue, and there, fainting on the ground, I found you. I flew to you. I snatched you in my arms, with your head resting on my breast, I bathed your brow, and called you back to life. Recovered from the illness your alarm had caused, you looked, and angel-like, guessed what was passing in my breast; and then, when spring-time

came—when arm-in-arm we wandered in the forest—then bright hopes dawned. You smiled upon the rough, untutored man, and smiling, told him you would not say 'No!' A few weeks more you murmured 'Yes!' Never shall I forget the word—that word which blessed me with such a treasure of a wife. By-the-bye, Leticia, do you remember this day three months?"

"I do indeed," she answered. "I shall never forget it, for that day you came home so ill-tempered and unkind. It was the first time you were ever cross with me."

"You remember it, do you? and so do I, to my shame. And yet, I have never had courage to tell you the reason. I know I was cruel, savage and—the fact is I—I was jealous."

"Jealous! You, Conrad? What was the cause?"

"You must know, then, that this day three months, and about this time in the morning, I was returning from my rounds, when I saw in the sand of the walk that leads to our cottage the print of a man's foot."

Leticia was strangely agitated at these words, but Conrad, intent upon his narration, did not notice her.

"You know, Leticia," he proceeded, "that to us forest-keepers signs are as intelligible as words, and any mark fixes our attention. So did the footmark mine; and looking closer and closer I soon discovered that it belonged to no one in the village. No one had a boot so finely shaped, so small, so narrow. Wondering what it could mean, I began following the direction of the footsteps, and they led—where do you think?"

"Where, Conrad?" asked Leticia, tremulously.

"Under that window. They were newly made—the dew fresh around them, but not on them; and I felt—I know not how, or what, but horrid thoughts came over me—my eyes flashed, my breast heaved, and I felt my teeth and hands clench. I committed all sorts of follies. I entered the cottage, where I found you waiting for me, as you were but now, and behaved like a madman; I could not speak—I was choking. Leticia, I was jealous."

"And, believe me, without cause."

"I know it, and I ask your pardon. I will never be jealous again. And now for breakfast."

"And then, Conrad, you must rejoin your companions," said Leticia, as she went into another apartment to prepare the meal.

Conrad gazed fondly after her—there was not a man in the province half so happy as he.

His reflections were disturbed by another visit from Gamard, who came in with a small bundle under his arm.

"Well, Gamard," cried Conrad, "you're a pretty fellow, ain't you, to be jealous of so good a wife?"

"It is all over now, Conrad," returned Gamard; "and as a proof of it, I have already set myself down to work again, and sown on the last button to a new coat I have been making for a customer."

All this was said quite sorrowfully.

"Well, what then?" responded Conrad. "There's no occasion to put on such a long face because a man wants a new coat."

"It is my every-day look, Conrad, when I take a customer home a coat. But this coat is a peculiar coat, and you'll very much oblige me by trying it on."

He undid the bundle and produced a soldier's coat. After some demurring Conrad at last consented to oblige the little tailor, and tried on the coat. It was by no means a bad fit. But when he was about to take it off, Gamard prevented him.

"If you'll take the advice of a friend," he said, "you'll wear it a little longer; for I heard you say once, that when a man meets with a little accident in his domestic affairs, he should take to a soldier's coat, and seek his death in the ranks of his country."

Conrad seized the little tailor with no gentle grasp.

"Those words!" he cried, "my own! And this coat! What do you mean? Speak, or I'll choke you!"

"How can I, if you squeeze me in that manner? I only say what you said, that, 'having traced her—having proved her false, I'd shake her off, and take to a soldier's coat!'"

"Death and furies! What do those words mean? Speak, or I'll shake the life out of you. And yet, should this be true—should he have discovered?—discovered what? Speak, oh, speak to me, Gamard. We are neighbours—friends, and you would not torture me in jest. Speak, and plainly. I promise to be calm."

"You must know, then," began Gamard, gaining courage from this assurance, "that after running home, I suddenly remembered something I had forgotten, and turned back again, and by the time I reached the little path that led to the cottage, I heard a loud shout of laughter; and I thought to myself that it was you

and the other keepers making game of me because I was jealous of my wife. So creeping carefully forward, who should I see but Etienne and the rest of the keepers laughing, and pointing to something on the ground, and all the time they kept following footmarks in the snow."

"Footmarks in the snow? What footmarks?"

"I don't know. But I heard them say, 'Yes, these are the same footsteps our chief, Conrad saw three months ago.'"

"Ha, the same! It cannot be, they are mistaken."

"That's what I told them; but they replied, 'They were forest-keepers and not to be deceived. So on they went, following the foot-prints in the snow.'"

"And where—where did they lead?" asked Conrad earnestly.

"Under that window!"

The reply staggered him.

"Is it possible?" he gasped, hoarsely. "Can I have been deceived? Her manner is altered—cold and strange since I came home; she trembled too, and though she tried to smile, there was no heart in it. That light in the window—I saw it three months ago! and then, as now, she was up—when at all other times she is in bed. A thousand thoughts flash through my mind and drive me mad, wild, and desperate! And who has caused this despair? My wife—the wife that I adored, and would have died for—ay, and will! I'll hide in death the shame, the misery she has caused me! But how—how is this? Tears in a soldier's eye! I am one now—a soldier of France! and tears—they are gone. Yes, Gamard, I have but one course left, despair and death. Come with me, to satisfy myself they are not deceived—the foot-prints—I should know them from a million! I will see them, trace them, track them! The footmarks, Gamard, the footmarks in the snow!"

So saying he dragged the tailor from the cottage, who now began to wish heartily that he had been wise enough to hold his peace. A quarter of an hour later, a man muffled in a cloak emerged cautiously from Conrad's cottage, into the grey daylight. Leticia appeared upon the threshold, bidding him adieu. The report of a gun echoed through the arches of the forest. The muffled man fell forward upon his face, and Leticia uttered a piercing scream. Though long expected, Conrad Rolfe never returned to his home.

CHAPTER III.

LOUIS XVIII. was restored to his throne and peace declared throughout Europe. The disbanded soldiers of the Republic and the Empire slowly made their way, as best they could, to the homes from which they had been so long absent.

The townfolks of Uzès, seized with a fit of Royalism, amused themselves by hooting a troop of disbanded soldiers, instead of respecting, nay, venerating, the sight of their old blue coats.

Ah, poor fellows! that was the return for all the battles they had won. To be disbanded, turned adrift and hooted at!

The old soldiers of the Empire, who had fought through all Napoleon's wars, driven about like a flock of sheep!

One old sergeant straggled into the garden of a handsome house in the suburbs, where a pretty young girl of some seventeen years barred the gate against the senseless rabble, and showed him great courtesy. The old grey moustache was somewhat surprised at her civility, and expressed himself to that effect.

"Oh, I love an old soldier," she exclaimed.

"Indeed!" grumbled the sergeant, "it's more than my other friends in the town do."

"Oh, yes, for my father was an old soldier."

"Yes, a Royalist," he cried with disdain.

"My father a Royalist!" she replied, proudly: "no! he fought under the Emperor!"

The old soldier regarded her with interest. Something in her face seemed familiar.

"Fought for the Emperor, did he?" he cried, with animation. "Why, my dear child, do you know I begin to love you as if you were my own."

"And so do I you; for who knows but you may have been a friend of my father's?"

"Was he disbanded, too, then? and, like us, hunted through the streets?"

"He was killed—he fell at Marengo."

"Poor child—poor father! And—Marengo? Why, my poor little girl, I was myself almost killed at Marengo. Shot through the body, I fell, and laid for days among the dead and dying."

"You recovered—you lived! Oh, what happiness for those who loved you."

"Loved me?" exclaimed the old soldier, bitterly. "No, I had no one to love me. I am alone in the world! Now your father—"

"I never saw him. I was born after he joined the army; but had he lived, he would have loved me, I know. But he had one bad fault, and that brought misery on us all. He was jealous."

"Jealous! Ah, some men can't help that."

"Men often do, who are unhappy in their homes. Pray whose daughter are you?"

"I am the daughter of Conrad Roloff. The soldier uttered a cry of joy and caught her in his arms, while tears streamed down his furrowed cheeks.

"God be praised!" he cried, fervently. "Nay, do not shrink from me—I am Conrad Roloff."

"Then come into the house," said the girl, naively, "and see my mother."

Conrad could not resist the appeal, and in a few moments he held Leticia, scarcely changed save for a settled look of sorrow on her fair face, once more in his arms.

The vindication of her innocence was very simple. Victor de Montiel being present to verify her words. For a whole year she had exposed herself to fearful risks, to prove her gratitude to her benefactors, who, exiled from their native home, had been reduced to beggary but for her; and when the broad lands of Montiel were offered up for sale, she hastened to the rich farmer, Campan, and induced him to become the purchaser of the domain, and so preserve unto their rightful owners the lands of their forefathers. Victor, a promiscuous Royalist, had crossed the frontier in disguise to receive the farm rents, which she collected and delivered into his hands, and so preserved from destruction a noble and respected family.

Conrad being a staunch Republican, she had feared to intrust him with the secret.

It was Victor's footsteps he had discovered in the snow.

His frenzy destroyed the usual accuracy of his aim, and Victor fortunately escaped with a slight wound.

On the Restoration the Montiels presented Leticia with the house she now occupied, and there Conrad found a welcome shelter after his long and arduous career as a soldier.

The fit of jealousy, caused by the footmarks in the snow had cost him the best years of his manhood following in the footmarks of Napoleon. But at last the soldier was at rest.

G. L. A.

It is a singular fact that the person of Stephens is known to but very few people, so varied and well managed have been his disguises. At the time of his arrest he was known to only one of the Dublin police. This constable was kept in the background while the arrest was being effected, because it is believed that if he made his appearance fight would be shown; and it was only when Stephens would not admit who he was, this policeman came from his ambush, and said, "How are you, Stephens?" Another precaution through which it is believed by the authorities, the Head Centre is enabled to baffles the police in this—he never lets any two people know where he is concealed for the moment, and never makes an appointment for any particular hour, or for any particular place. If he wants to see any of the Fenians he comes upon them unexpect-dly, and is off, and has a change of quarters effected before the detectives can have received information. One of the coolest things connected with the career of Stephens was the fact of his attending at the house of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, as tutor to that learned judge's children, during a portion of the very time when he was organizing the Fenian business. The police still believe that his capture is only a question of time.

THE ALPS MADE EASY.—What I specially want to call attention to is the fact that now the high Alps, the regions of snow and ice, can be explored, so as to give a sufficient idea of them, even by those who are quite unfit for the exploits of mountaineers. By a judicious use of ponies, high hotels, *cabanes*, and caves, acquaintance can be made with the wildest scenery of snowy Switzerland, with positively less expenditure of physical energy than is laid out by innumerable pedestrians in tramping through hot valleys, and crossing such beaten tracks as the Furca and the Wengern Alp. Mont Blanc itself—the ascent of which, some years ago, made Albert Smith's fortune—is within the reach of anyone who is a tolerable walker, and chooses to spend from two to three hundred francs. By taking three days to this labour, from the inn on the Col di Vosa, it is not necessary to go over more ground in one day than what is calculated, in favourable weather, as six hours' walking. From the *cabane* on the Aiguille du Gouté, the distance to the summit is only four hours, and the traveller who feels himself unfit for further exertion can sleep a second night in the *cabane*, which he will probably do more comfortably than he did the first night, being more accustomed to the rarified air, and

finding the atmosphere on the top of the Aiguille a relief from that on the top of Mont Blanc, just as Humboldt's traveller, descending the Andes, found themselves oppressed by heat at places where, on the ascent, they had shivered. It is only five hours from the Riffel Hotel to the top of the Cima di Jasi, and about three and a half back again. The way lies chiefly over glacier and *séne*, amid some of the wildest scenery presented by the Monte Rosa group; after rounding a crust of snow we stand above precipitous thousands of feet in depth, and behold Lago Maggiore as if it lay beneath our feet, while the fertile plains of Lombardy stretch in the dim distance.

ALI-BEN-IDDEN

CHAPTER XXI

THE anxious night of the viceroys and his friends lasted through the night. Nothing was seen of Yusuf—no message sent, no explanation of his absence given.

The anxiety of all concerned grew terrible. With the first gleams of day Haschid went abroad, still in his disguise, to see if he could solve the mystery, and Mohammed arose from his bed, suffering and pronounced himself well.

The glow of his usual health was indeed returning to his cheeks, slowly but surely, although the anxiety of his position—and especially those of the past night—weighed heavily upon him.

"It's time for me to move," he said to the old sponge-gatherer. "Perhaps those wretches at the palace have tracked Yusuf here. Their minions may come here to seize us any moment. They may have already put Yusuf to death. However that may be, it is time for me to claim my own, and put an end to this reign of terror and injustice."

He awaited the return of Haschid with feverish impatience.

"And where can Abdul be all this while?" he soon continued. "Am I never to learn the secret in the possession of his mother?"

He waited nearly an hour, when there was a hasty knock at the street-door, and the old merchant entered. He was deeply moved and excited.

"I bring startling news, sire," he said. "Thurbat has been appointed viceroy by the sultan."

"Allah! Allah! is it possible? How they have worked!"

"And he assumes the vice-royalty to-day, with all pomp and splendour," pursued Haschid. "I have been able to see only a few of our friends, but these few are overwhelmed with grief at your supposed death, and at the appointment of Thurbat. They tell me that many of your officers and subjects are so indignant and outspoken, that the prince has filled every dungeon in the city with them."

"Indeed! Then we must act promptly," said Mohammed, arising. "I am glad to hear that my old friends remain true to me, and we will now seek them."

"Worse than all," added Haschid, in a voice that trembled with grief. "I learn that our noble preserver has been arrested and flung into a dungeon!"

"What! Yusuf!"

"Ay, Yusuf! The charge is that he is conspiring against the government."

The effect of this communication upon the viceroys was terrible. His face became deathly pale, then flushed red, and at length his hue became settled paleness.

"And as to my poor child," concluded Haschid, "I have not been able to learn a word about her. She is no doubt in one of the many dungeons that those wretches have peopled."

The viceroys felt deeply for the old man's grief, and talked soothingly to him.

"We are equally under the clouds of misfortune," added Mohammed. "The seizure of Yusuf touches me as nearly as would the loss of a loved son. We'll hasten to see if we have any power remaining in these realms or not."

He prepared to go out, buckling on his scimitar and securing his other weapons. While he and Haschid were getting ready, there came another knock on the door, and Abdul was promptly admitted. The youth's face was pale, and his manner strangely excited.

"My mother follows close behind me," he said to the old sponge-gatherer. "Let her have admittance." A figure was borne up the steps and into the house on a sort of stretcher by a couple of men, who then withdrew.

The astonishment of Kader and his wife was great on beholding that this figure was Morah, their old neighbour.

The countenance of the wretched woman was pallid and her sunken eyes were momentarily fixed and

glassy. It was evident at a glance that she was dying.

She panted for breath. A few incoherent murmurs escaped her lips as she was deposited at the feet of the viceroys, and looked around upon the persons in the room.

"Pardon for my mother, sire," exclaimed Abdul, as he threw himself upon his knees at the feet of the viceroys. "I have come as soon as I could—as fast as she could be moved. She is dying. We implore your forgiveness."

"Ah! this is the woman—the possessor of the information I desire," said the viceroys. "Quick! a cordial, or something to revive her. Not for worlds would I have her secret escape us!"

It seemed as if the whole soul of the viceroys was bound up in the life of Morah. He hung over her, gave her a reviving cordial himself, fanned her with his own hands, and called her back to consciousness and strength by the very force of his sympathy and interest. She was soon able to speak.

"Forgive me, sire," were her first words. "I see that you do not remember me, and I would that there were no necessity for me to recall to your remembrance one so unworthy. I am Morah, formerly the head nurse to your lady."

Mohammed started. The resemblance Morah bore her former self was sufficient to carry his thoughts back to the days when she was filling an honoured and trusted place in his family.

"I remember you," he said kindly. "Go on!"

"I come to confess a grievous sin," the dying woman continued, as soon as she could find breath. "As Abdul told you, Thurbat is not your son. Two children were changed in their cradles by me. Your real son is—the young sponge-gatherer, Yusuf Kader!"

The words must have found strong corroboration in the soul of Mohammed, for he did not repeat the declaration or ask a single question. He sank back into a chair and covered his face with his garments. A hush like that of death fell upon the scene.

"I knew it! I knew it!" finally cried the viceroys, with sobs and tears, in which the pent souls of all present instantly joined. "All this long night have I lain awake, and taken the blessed truth to my soul! My noble and glorious boy—"

He started to his feet as if to find in action that relief words could not give him.

"This man," continued Morah, indicating the old sponge-gatherer, "will tell you how the boy came into his keeping. While Ali was deceiving others, I deceived him. Putting Yusuf out of my hands, I have represented my own son (about whom Ali knew nothing) as the real son and heir. In this way the chamberlain has been kept ignorant of the truth."

The faint and incoherent words of Morah attested that she was near her end.

"Forgive me, sire," she repeated. "Yusuf Kader is your own son. As a dying woman I implore you to receive the truth. With my last breath I will attest it."

The viceroys expressed his forgiveness to the unhappy woman, and declared his belief in her communication. She was able to give him a few further particulars and explanations, but it was not long ere her voice failed her. Even as the viceroys and Haschid were exchanging congratulations over the truth she had revealed, a burst of grief from Abdul and a sensation of awe in those around him showed that she was dead.

"Let peace be with her," said Mohammed, with uncovered head. "And with you also," he added, as he placed his hand upon Abdul's shoulder. "You have been faithful in this matter to me, and shall not be unworarded."

He seated himself and remained silent a moment in the deep emotions crowding upon his soul, while Haschid made some suggestions to Kader about the burial of the deceased, and addressed a few words of sympathy and consolation to Abdul.

"And now a great work devolves upon me," said Mohammed, arising. "The palace must be cleared of the vipers that have taken possession of it, and our noble children must be restored to us."

"Heaven grant that they be not dead already!" exclaimed Haschid.

Dismissing himself, Mohammed took the arm of his beloved and trusted friend, and they set out through the streets towards the citadel. They were soon in the presence of the commandant, a grey-haired veteran, who was at the moment of their arrival beavelling the accession of Thurbat, and preparing his resignation.

"That form—that walk!" cried the bewildered officer, as his eyes rested upon the foremost intruder. "Can't be a deception, or has Allah deigned—"

Mohammed removed his disguise, and the commandant dropped upon his knees with powerful ejaculations of delight.

"Hush!" said the viceroys. "The secret must go no further until some of your faithful troops are in position."

CHAPTER XXII.

As heartily as the successful conspirators had rejoiced, they were not without anxieties and cares. They had earnest discussions with each other in the interior of the palace.

They increased the body guard, and took every step to be expected of oppressive and heartless tyrants. The prisons were already filled to overflowing, as Haschid had stated.

The substantial men of the city had given the new regime the cold shoulder or a plain defiance. A mere rabble, with nothing to lose and all to gain, had made some acclamations in the streets, but the greater part of the troops, like the more respectable portion of the people, had preserved an ominous silence.

"Let them win," said Ali to Thurbat, in response to some low indication of the prince's unpopularity. "We need not fear them. The power is in our hands. All will soon get quiet. In the meantime, let's decide the fate of that girl. Perhaps you had better make our more appeal to her."

"It will do no good," replied Thurbat, moodily. "Still, we will see her."

The two men soon stood in one of the lowest corridors of the prison adjoining the palace. They had brought a lantern and the keys of the cells.

Passing before a dungeon in which only condemned criminals had previously been confined, Ali unlocked it and entered, with Thurbat at his heels. In this damp and noxious place was Isolette.

She was chained to the wall by a chain fastened to an iron band clasped around her waist. She was seated upon an old mattress as the two miscreants entered. Her appearance was mournful enough.

"We've come," said Ali, "to see if there has been any change in your views since yesterday. The good fortune attending the prince in other matters has led him to hope that you will be gracious. He has been duly appointed viceroy by the sultan, and to-day takes formal possession of his office. Why should you longer persist in your unwise course? He still desires to share his honours with you. Consent to be his wife, to keep all that we have done secret, and to make all right between us and your father, by telling him the story I formerly suggested, that you were seized by robbers, and that we effected your rescue."

There was a momentary silence.

"It is in vain that you come to me with these propositions," Isolette then said. "I will never wed the Prince Thurbat, nor make your peace with my father for these outrages. If I ever find just cause to listen I will denounce your cruelty and baseness to them. I defy you as much as I despise you!"

"It is as I told you," said Thurbat. "She'll never change."

"Except when she changes into dust," interrupted Ali, with a sullen fury. "That's a change she'll hardly avoid."

They withdrew, locking the door. "She thinks we won't starve her," whispered Ali, "but we will. Her death is now a necessity—both a relief and a precaution. She shall perish!"

"Let's take a look at her lover," said Thurbat. "I shall not feel assured of his safe keeping until he's dead."

All seconded this proposition, and led the way along the corridor to another, into which he turned. They came to the dungeon in which our hero was confined, and unlocked the door, and opened it, entering his presence.

The directions of Ali and his son had been duly followed, and the prisoner had not received a morsel of food or any water to drink since his arrest, a load of chains had been put upon him, securing his hands and feet, and even his body.

The whole were connected with a huge staple in the wall. The air in the dungeon was so noxious that the villains both recoiled. It had long been unused.

"Are you sure that he's quite helpless?" asked Thurbat.

"Oh, quite. I came myself and looked after his safe keeping."

Ali raised his lantern as he uttered these words, and the prisoner looked upon his visitors. An involuntary expression of scorn curved his lips, and a momentary flash appeared in his eyes, but he said nothing.

"He was proud as ever," said Thurbat, bitterly, as he marked and felt the great difference between our hero's princely bearing and his own mean and cowardly characteristics. "I wish it was safe to let him live a while. I'd try to humble him."

"You would fail, were you to make such an attempt," replied Ali quietly. "Mark his face and form well. Where have you seen a man like him? Have you not yet had suspicions that this man is no common sponge-gatherer? Have you not realized what stuff he is made of?"

Thurbat looked from the prisoner to his father a

moment with a perplexed and anxious air, as if some great secret had suddenly entered his mind.

"What would you say?" he demanded. "Do you really have a suspicion that—that—"

The emotion attending his suspicions choked him.

"What should I mean," responded Ali. "Are we not aware that the children were changed? Why should not both reach the years of manhood? In brief, why shouldn't this sponge-gatherer be the real son and heir of Mohammed?"

It was several moments before Thurbat replied. His voice was husky with apprehension as he said:

"I see it all. The mystery is plain. I shall not breathe free till he also is dead."

This conversation had been carried on in whispers and Yusuf had paid but little attention to it. He had realized their murderous intentions, and was busily canvassing the prospects of his escape.

He remembered that the viceroy was nearly restored to health, and was aware of Mohammed's intention to appear in the midst of his foes at an early day.

"They cannot be aware that Mohammed has returned to the city," he thought. "Perhaps even now measures are in progress which will hurl them to ruin."

Ali now turned to the prisoner and said:

"You must be aware that you are in our way, and must be removed. You have come between the prince and the object of his love, and killed several of our friends, to say nothing of the guards you killed last night. Of course you expect to suffer death for these deeds."

The reflections of our hero concerning the viceroy's probable movements had given a new light of scorn and defiance to his eyes.

He was far from expecting the doom suggested, although he did not care to disturb the plans and views of Ali by being confidential. He accordingly replied:

"As I have no voice in your decisions, you will excuse me from meddling with them!"

He turned his back upon them, and they passed out of the dungeon, Ali remarking that he would have him shot during the afternoon for killing the guards.

They did not notice as they passed along that the guards of the prison had been changed. Neither did they notice a group of persons who suddenly came down the corridor leading to Yusuf's dungeon—the viceroy, Haschid, and others!

"This way, sire," whispered the gaoler. "The grief it caused me to look them up can be compared only with the joy it gives me to release them! I intended to set them at liberty to-night, and then blow my brains out."

He opened the door of Yusuf's dungeon, hastily entered, and set the surprised prisoner at liberty.

"Go out, most noble prince," he said, "failing at his feet, 'go out!'"

Yusuf went out, with the air of one in a trance, not knowing what his sudden intrusion meant; but the forms and faces upon which his eyes instantly rested told him that the right cause was in the ascendant—that his hopes were more than accomplished—that he was free!

"My son, my son!" exclaimed the viceroy, clasping him to his breast. "Thank heaven!"

While he held our hero in his tender and fatherly embrace, he briefly explained their newly-discovered relationship.

Haschid and the gaoler passed on to the dungeon in which was confined Isolette.

"This way," finally said the viceroy, following his friend. "There is still great joy in store for you. We have come in season to save Isolette."

They hurried along the corridor, to the spot where the maiden and her father were mingling their tears of joy together.

The latter relinquished her only to the loving arms of Yusuf.

"And now," said Mohammed to the gaoler, "release all of Thurbat's prisoners, while we go to prepare a surprise for our enemies. This way, all—to liberty and light!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

The authority of Mohammed was already restored in the palace. One by one the guards appointed by Ali and Thurbat had been removed and replaced, while their masters were gloating over their victims in the prison; one by one the viceroy and the commandant of the citadel had made their dispositions for overpowering the conspirators and their minions; and every step had been taken with such caution that the arch-plotters were still ignorant of their impending doom.

And at length, a couple of hours later, the grand saloons of the palace were filled with guests, and more were arriving every minute.

A part of these had upon their faces a great shadow.

They had realized the loss the nation had sustained in the supposed death of Mohammed, and looked with apprehension to a future in which they should be governed by the base and profligate Thurbat. They would have stayed away from the festivities and ceremonies of the day had it not been for the fear of incurring the displeasure and vengeance of the new viceroy.

Another part consisted of the profligate companions of Thurbat and the minions of Ali, many of them clad in the richest costumes, and glittering with gold and jewels.

A third class of guests consisted of faithful soldiers the commandant of the citadel had introduced into the assembly; and a fourth class comprised of certain noble and powerful friends Mohammed had enlightened and summoned.

And thus the great denouement of these changes and mysteries was approaching.

The rooms were ablaze with splendour. The windows had been shaded and covered with costly curtains and the chandeliers had all been lighted, making the rooms appear more brilliant than they could by daylight.

Everything was as gorgeous as the warmest Oriental imagination could conceive, or the most skilful artists execute.

At one end of the room, the throne which awaited the new viceroy was hidden by a heavy curtain of crimson damask, so arranged that it could be readily caught up by cords with pendant tassels of bullion.

Men, clad in the livery of the household, stood ready to perform this office. Stern guardsmen were ranged around this part of the grand saloon. All was ready. The buzz and hum of whispering voices was suddenly hushed, the heavy folding doors at the end of the saloon were flung open, and Thurbat, gorgeously attired, and attended by Ali, his prime minister, and followed by a retinue of newly appointed dignitaries, advanced through the opening crowd towards the throne.

All eyes were fixed on the pageant.

The cortège paused before the crimson curtain.

"What means this mummery of veiling the throne?" asked Ali of a guardsman in a harsh tone, without noticing that the man was not one of his minions. "Away with that curtain!"

A breathless silence reigned as the curtain parted, and the startling spectacle it had concealed was presented.

Upon the throne, wearing the glittering crown so eagerly desired and schemed for by Thurbat and Ali, sat the viceroy, Mohammed Omar.

At his right hand, clad in costliest garments, stood the princely form of his son, Yusuf Kader—his noble face and regal bearing attracting every eye. He supported with one arm the brave and gentle Isolette, who was attired in bridal garments.

On the left of Mohammed stood his own newly appointed prime minister, Abd-el-Haschid.

And as the some burst upon the astonished gaze of Ali and Thurbat and their minions, from every part of the crowded saloons came the deafening cheers of Mohammed's friends, coupled with the peals of trumpets, and the blasts of the band in attendance, and a perfect roar of loyal and loving greetings hailed the restored ruler.

It expresses little of the withering effect of all this upon Ali to say that he was paralyzed. He was too confounded to move, speak, or even breathe. With eyes that seemed starting from their sockets he looked from one to another of his escaped victims.

"Horror of horrors!" he finally gasped; "we are lost, Thurbat—utterly ruined!"

The despairing cry was lost in the storm of renewed applause which greeted the viceroy and the friends beside him.

At the same moment the boom of cannon sounded on the air, and bands commenced playing in the streets, and the shouts and exclamations of those within the palace were caught up and echoed by the rejoicing multitudes without.

Suddenly two men belonging to the guard stepped forward and deprived each of the villains of their glittering swords and weapons.

And it was now that Ali thought himself of flight, and took a hasty step towards the door, only to see that the way was blocked up by stern guardsmen, and that his late retinue was endeavouring to lose itself in the crowd of surrounding guests. And thus the two villains—a mark for every eye—stood alone and still gazed upon the throne and its occupants.

And now the viceroy arose and met the friendly and delighted gaze of his people.

"My friends," he began, in his clear tones, which convinced some of the far off and doubting ones that it was really Mohammed. "I have been the victim of base treachery. A few weeks since when I was travelling across the desert, I was attacked by a band of ruffians, who were headed by Ali, my former chamberlain, and Thurbat, and wounded and left to

die. The wretches supposed they had killed me, and so returned in all haste to set up Thurbat's claim to the throne. I have recovered—and you witness their defeat."

Deafening cheers rang through the lofty saloons, and Ali cast despairing glances around him, while Thurbat cowered in all his finery and looked in vain for a place of escape.

"I have a stranger story still to communicate," continued the viceroi, as soon as silence was restored. "My beloved son—the child of my wife Zuleika—was changed by Ali for his own son, while my boy was less than a month old, through the aid of Morah, my child's head nurse. Since then, I have nourished a viper in my bosom in the form of Thurbat, the son of Ali, my chamberlain. The cause of my journey across the desert was to visit this Morah, who had sent a messenger to me with the story of her guilt and wrong-doing. I was saved from certain death on the desert—where I lay wounded and delirious—by my own son. He nursed me through a subsequent fever, and I received the dying deposition of Morah as to his identity. And if that were not enough, look at him as he stands before you, and trace his resemblance to me, his father. Let me introduce you to my son—Prince Yusef!"

He took our hero by the hand and led him forward. The light of a hundred glittering chandeliers rested upon them both as they stood upon the throne, and a prolonged and enthusiastic cheering succeeded the exclamations of wonder and joy which had followed the viceroi's statement.

Cheers for the viceroi and Prince Yusef resounded throughout the palace, and were caught up and echoed by the throngs outside, while the guns again fired and bands played.

Ali was ghastly pale. He had listened to every word of the speech of Mohammed with a sullen despair. Thurbat clung to his father, and showed his utter cowardice by his trembling knees and chattering teeth.

"My return has not been unnoticed," said Mohammed, looking sternly at the two villains. "You hear the cheers of my people and see that I have a home in their hearts. Take them to prison," he added, addressing an officer of the guard, who promptly advanced, attended by several men, to execute the order.

Ali flashed a look of defiance at Mohammed, at Yusef and Isolette, at his treacherous followers, who had gone over to the side of the viceroi and cheered as loudly as any, hoping thus to escape justice; and then he drew a vial from his pocket and placed it to his lips before his design was perceived.

"Take it, Thurbat," he said, handing the vial to his son. "Defy them to the last."

Thurbat trembled with a coward's fear of death, then snatched at the vial, as he beheld the officer's approach, and eagerly drained it.

"You are cheated of your prisoners!" said Ali, with a ghastly smile, as Thurbat fell at his feet in the agonies of death.

The next moment the chamberlain sank upon the body of his wretched son, and they died together. The bodies were hastily removed, and the festivities went on.

The newly-appointed officers of the household, who had been appointed by the two villains, seized the opportunity of slipping from the palace. The men who had been imprisoned by Thurbat had already been released, and now entered to make the scene still more joyous.

To crown the festivities, Prince Yusef and the Lady Isolette were married on the same day, and a week of rejoicing followed, during which time our hero made himself loved and honoured by the friends of his father.

In conclusion, Abdul received the gift of the house occupied by the Kadars, with boats, etc., and married Thirza, who received a handsome dowry from her mistress, and the couple lived happily. Haschid continued to reside alternately at Cairo and his castle.

The Kadars received a present of a handsome house and a good income from Yusef, and the old man often proudly referred to the fulfilment of his prophecy in regard to Yusef's eventual greatness.

The viceroi and his son regarded each other with the truest and fondest affection, and the most perfect sympathy and confidence existed between them until the death of Mohammed.

Yusef succeeded to the viceroyalty, and reigned wisely and well, so that he was even more admired and loved by the good, and feared by the evil, than his father had been.

And the love he bore the bright young Arab girl deepened with every hour of his being, and their life glided on like a calm and deep river, their happiness overflowing like the waters of the Nile, blessing and improving every one who came within the extended circle of their influence.

THE END.

A CALIFORNIAN OPAL MINE.—An opal mine has just been discovered in Calaveras county, California, the deposit being claimed by seven different companies. The vein is from four to eight inches thick, containing large quantities of opalite minerals, sometimes in the shape of kidneys, and sometimes resembling the branches of a tree in form. Some specimens are coloured, some are pearly, and others are a dead white all through, like chalk; others again are of much transparency and purity, and yield on analysis—silica, 90.50; water, 9.50; total, 100, these being, in fact, the elements of pure opal.

THE FACE IN THE MIRROR.

I NEVER could quite understand that infatuation of the Londoners which keeps them sweltering in the dust and heat of the town all through the delicious summer days—when country lanes are sweet with roses and hawthorn, when the turf under the oaks is soft and thick, tempting one to most blissful idleness and day-dreaming—and then sends them into the country just in time to catch it in all its forlornness, when the trees are only gigantic scarecrows, and all the odour and freshness has faded from field and lane.

The sitting of parliament is, I am aware, the pretext; to me an inadequate and unsatisfactory one, because the world of fashion was as oblivious of my existence as I was indifferent to its own, and the gay, human parterre that shone in Hyde Park was to me a poor substitute for the drowsy wild flowers that I knew were wasting their sweetness unseen in every nook and shady greenery in this dear, generous old England of ours.

But a struggling barrister may not choose his holiday, and so I sat in my chambers in the Temple, and went over musty documents, and grew muddled and moist, and ready to confound parliament and people, but knowing that I must hold on till October, when I meant to run down to Scotland for a few days of grouse shooting.

Imagine, then, my surprise and delight when quite unexpectedly it became necessary for me to leave town.

Tossing over my letters one day, pigeon-holing some, flinging others into the waste-basket, and mentally consigning them all to perdition, I came upon Tom Mallory's great, awkward, school-boy hand—my own name sprawling over a whole envelope, and adorned with an incredible number of flourishes, which gave it a pretentious, important air, and led me to exclaim that something was up now.

I tore it open hastily, and the next moment had sent it whirling towards the ceiling with a loud hurrah.

Tom was going to be married! And to an heiress! More wonderful and incredible still! Yet there it was in black and white, under Tom's own signature.

"I want you to come down," he wrote, "not only to be best man, but in order to arrange some business matters which I had rather entrust to you than to any one else. The old folks—Janet's father and mother, you know—insist upon having most of her property settled upon herself, but there's a very pretty estate which I have given them to understand must be put into my hands if I'm to undertake the management of it, for I've no idea of being my wife's steward. We had some words about it, but the old governor came round at last, and I want you here to make every thing fast and firm. I want you to see Janet, too. She is the finest girl in the county, and is very much in love with your cousin and friend—Tom Mallory."

I got rather disgusted with my cousin and friend before I finished the letter. Tom had never been a favourite of mine, and it was never a source of pride to me that he bore my family name, and was my cousin, though three or four times removed. He was a big, burly fellow, twice my size, and used to fag me at Eton most unmercifully.

I tried to revenge myself when I grew older by pelting him with squibs and satires, but the fellow had no sensitiveness, and never knew when my pointed arrows went home.

He was something of a prig, and a good deal of a scamp.

Indeed I had strong suspicions that he was an undeveloped villain.

Not that he had ever robbed a bank, or been concerned in house-breaking, or been a defaulter to the extent of a million or so, or in any way distinguished himself.

Circumstances make or mar us all, and circumstances had never been favourable to the development of Tom's genius.

A pretty account to give of my relations, you will say. But I cannot help that. Respectable families have had discreditable members ever since that unfortunate homicide in Eden a good many years ago. But I confess that latterly I had rather dropped Tom, partly from a dislike of him, and partly from an idea

that he wasn't an altogether desirable connection for a young man who has his way to make, and doesn't want to be bespattered with anybody else's foulness.

This being so, it seemed rather mean for me to catch so heartily at the idea of going down to the wedding. As I thought it over I was half inclined not to go, but the longing for a breath of country air conquered my scruples. I had some curiosity too, to see the bride.

Of course I knew Tom was an heiress hunter, for he was the younger son of a not very opulent family, and too lazy and dull for any of the working professions?

And so Tom had succeeded. I imagined I knew what the bride was like, stout and muscular, weighing at least one hundred and sixty pounds avoirdupois, a complexion of that rubicund character which comes from plenty of ale and haggis, and a superfluity of the damp, cold, bracing air of her native lochs and mountains.

I grew so sure of the fidelity of my portrait that I really began to pity Tom, and to think that he had paid dearly for his heiress; for if there is anything distasteful to me it is to see the feminine human soul smothered in muscle and fat. I couldn't fall in love with Venus herself if she was uncomfortably large. Poor Tom!

I went down to Edinburgh in quite a complacent, contented frame of mind. I wasn't, to be sure, going to marry an heiress, but when I found the little fairy who was my ideal—God bless her!—I should be able to support her with my own strong brain and willing hand. I didn't envy Tom in the least, not I.

An hour after leaving Edinburgh the train set me down in the loveliest little valley that lay between the Tweed and the Thames.

There was nobody at the station to meet me, but the railway porter pointed to a high red brick house on a hillside a little way up the valley.

"You go in by the gate upon the road, sir. You can see the house plainly now, but as you approach it is lost in the foliage. The avenue is a mile long or more."

I pushed on accordingly, in spite of the density of the wood which led me to fear that I was losing myself, and at last came upon an open, green lawn in the very heart of the wood; a bright sunny place, with a flower garden at the further end of it, and a little tinkling fountain that sang through the green stillness as low and softly as if it were a fairy's home.

But I gave only one hasty glance around, for there just at the foot of the steps that led up to the door, stood Miss Janet Douglass.

I could not doubt that it was she, tall, ponderous, florid—she was all my fancy had painted her. I took off my hat at once.

"Miss Douglass, is it not?"

She turned her blue eyes upon me. There was a steely gleam in them that made me shiver. After taking a cool survey of me, she said in a deep, bass voice that she was Miss Douglass, and was I "the Mr. Mallory that Tom had been expecting?" she added.

I assured her that I had that honour, and then she put out her hand and said with a smile that showed a very handsome set of teeth:

"I am very happy to see you, sir, and so, too, will poor dear Tom be, I am sure. He often says of you that you are just the same as a brother to him. Poor, dear Tom has such an affectionate heart, didn't I think so?" she added.

I stammered out what I hope was a harmless white lie, and sat down, amused and perplexed. It was certainly very frank and naive of her to call him dear Tom, and must be very gratifying to him; but why "poor" Tom? I didn't presume to ask, however, but sat, I hope patiently, while Miss Douglass made conversation.

She told me what was the amount of taxes which her father paid, enlightened me as to the net income of the place, and confided to me her opinion of Huddleston, the head manager, who appeared, from all she said of him, to be a very worthless sort of a fellow.

She also gave me a detailed account of the MacVicar, neighbours of theirs, who lived some five miles away, and how it came about that the engagement between the eldest Miss MacVicar and Sir Aleck Wallace was broken off, and how he felt, and how she felt, and how their dear five hundred friends felt; all of which, as I did not know, and devoutly hoped I never should know the parties, was, you may imagine, very interesting to me.

Just as she had reached that limit beyond which, I am sure, human endurance must have ceased, there was a diversion made by a stylish drag being driven up to the door.

An exclamation from Miss Douglass startled me.

"Oh, dear, dear! Mr. Mallory, run out directly, do!"

I did so

There were only ladies in the vehicle, and the horses, a handsome, spirited pair of bays, were not at all inclined to be controlled by the slender hands that held the reins, and were backing and plunging in a manner quite terrifying to weak nerves.

It was the work of a moment to seize the bridle, and then I looked up at the occupants of the carriage.

Two of the girls, handsome, stylish brunettes, were screaming with terror, and only recovered their equanimity when I assured them repeatedly that all danger was past.

The third, who held the reins, was a little, delicate creature, scarcely more than a child in size, with a lovely, *spirituelle* face, framed in bands of brown hair that lay across her forehead as smooth and plain as a nun's.

The large, soft hazel eyes were dilated with fright and the sweet face was as white as snow. As I helped her to alight, she said, tremulously:

"Thank you very much. I was afraid to drive the bays, but Tom insisted that I might, and so we left him at Alderton."

"Left him at Alderton?"

Miss Douglass had rushed out and now began in *medias res*. "The naughty fellow! Doesn't he know that Mr. Mallory must be come by this time. I should have thought, Nettie—"

She broke off short here, and looking around I caught a glimpse of the little lady's garments as she fled upstairs.

Miss Douglass looked abashed for an instant, but presently recovering her composure, introduced me to the Miss MacVicar.

They were dashing, brilliant girls, and there was an interchange of sharp jests for a few minutes; then the ladies went to dress for dinner, and I strolled upon the lawn to enjoy my cigar.

I took two or three turns round the garden, admiring the pure white lilies and the ruy splendour of the oleanders, and then threw myself down under a tree, and presently fell into a drowse.

I was soon awakened by a shout loud and sonorous enough for a view-hollos. I gathered myself up, sleepily.

"Is that you, Tom?"

Of course it was he, and I am bound to confess that time had not improved his looks, and he was never a beauty.

But I thought of Miss Douglass, and remembered that matches were made in heaven.

"Have you seen her?" said Tom, presently.

"Miss Douglass? Yes."

"Isn't she a stunner?" asked Tom, enthusiastically.

"She is indeed!" I said, warmly.

"I knew you'd think so!" rejoined Tom. "Just in your style, isn't she? I always thought that if you'd seen her first, you'd have fallen in love with her yourself."

"Indeed!" I said, dryly. Tom was so conceited and satisfied, that I couldn't resist the temptation of giving him an ugly little poke, so I added, "Don't you think, though, my dear fellow, that there is rather too much of her?"

Tom stared at me for a moment, and then laughed, uproariously.

"By Jove, that is a good one!" he said, when he could speak.

"And who are the Miss MacVicar?" I said, presently, for I was cautiously feeling my way towards an inquiry after my little beauty.

"Nice girls," said Tom, warmly, "especially Flora. Ain't she sharp on a flirtation, though—carries a man beyond his depth before he knows it."

I listened to Tom's coarse speech, and looking up into his coarse face wondered whether Miss Douglass would not box his ears if she were there.

I had a great repugnance to asking any more questions of Tom, but in the end my eagerness to know something of the pretty brown-haired fairy conquered.

"And who was the little lady that drove home with them?" I asked, as carelessly as I could.

"What," said Tom, "what lady? I didn't know anybody drove home with them. I should think there were enough of them in the house now."

"I mean the pretty brown-haired girl who held the reins when the horses came dashing up the avenue. Her face was as white as snow, but it was a very lovely one, nevertheless."

Tom stared at me, an expression of wonder beginning to creep over his face.

"Was she fair, and had she curls?" he asked.

"Yes."

"What did she wear?"

"Some delicate grey stuff; and, oh, there was a jaunty feather in her cap. What in heaven's name are you staring so for?"

Tom burst out laughing. He laughed till he grew so red that I was in mortal fear of apoplexy, and only

came round at last when I threatened to hold him under the fountain.

"Why, you blockhead," he gasped at length, "that was Janet?"

"Janet Douglass, the girl whom you are going to marry?" I said, after a moment's speechless astonishment.

"Of course. Why, Hal, I thought you said you had seen her."

"I—I thought I had," I stammered. "I thought the tall one was Miss Janet."

"You did? Why, that is Miss Mary, daughter of the first Mrs. Douglass, you see. Did you think I was going to marry her? Give me credit for better taste, Hal. Besides, she hasn't a penny. Janet's fortune comes from her mother; the Douglass family are as poor as church mice. And so you took her for Janet? Do you know I meant you should marry her. Oh, you needn't be angry. You see I knew she would make a dead set at you the moment she saw you, and that she did I see now by your face."

Just here the dinner-bell sounded, and we went in. In the dining-room I was introduced to Mr. Douglass, a hale old gentleman, full of prejudice and bigotry, with a leaven of superstition, but warm-hearted and affable.

The Miss MacVicar appeared in a jaunty costume that suited their piquant style to a charm. Miss Flora especially, looked so pretty and ogled Tom in such a bewitching manner, to Tom's evident delight, that I couldn't help thinking Miss Janet's heart must ache a little, if she loved Tom. But she sat there in her pretty muslin dress, looking as fresh, and pure, and calm as a lily.

Her face was as innocent as a child's and her manner as unaffected. Before dinner was over, I was more than half in love with her myself—though, indeed, I had been that from the first—and began to grudge Tom his good fortune in winning the love of such a girl.

But had he won it? Some curious doubts began to grow up in my mind. I watched her when she would look up in his face, and fancied those sweet blue eyes would have had a different expression if looking into the face of the man she loved. I was not young and foolish enough to imagine that betrothal necessarily included the idea of love.

That illusion had faded along with a good many pleasant fictions which I believed in when I was younger.

She might be going to marry him for any one of the fifty reasons that are sure to influence more or less such a decision.

Here then was a chance for a romantic melodrama; all the elements were upon the spot. If I had been a Frenchman, I dare say I should have made love to her, and supplanted Tom; then there would have been an elopement, a pursuit, a duel, and a bloody *dénouement*.

But being only a common-place young Englishman, with some old-fashioned notions concerning honour and propriety, I contented myself with confounding Tom's luck, and growing sentimental over my cigar in the solitude of my own room.

It was a glorious summer night; the moon, round and large, flooded the world in a brightness, yellow and warm, and far lovelier than daylight; so clear, too, that as I leaned forward from my window to catch the breath of the oleanders, I could plainly see the outline of the leaves and blossoms.

It was past twelve o'clock, and the country lay still under the moonlight, so still that when I pushed aside the woodbine that clambered over my window, the long branches shook with a rustle and stir that filled all the air.

My cigar was turned down at last, and I rose to go to bed; the silence and the beauty of the night weighed upon me.

Just as I put my hand upon the window curtain to lower it, a loud curdling shriek broke upon the awful stillness—a cry so full of agony and horror that I was thrilled with fright.

In an instant I had rushed from the room, and run along the corridor in the direction from whence the sound proceeded.

The sound of heavy, convulsive sobs arrested me, coming from the apartment which I knew was Miss Janet's.

I burst open the door without a moment's hesitation. She was cowering upon the floor, her long hair floating over her shoulders, and her face white and wild.

I lifted her up, and she clung to me, sobbing pitifully, but her eyes were quite dry and dilated, and the pretty mouth quivered and worked in vain attempts to speak.

I prayed her to be composed, and to tell me what had terrified her, but before she had in the least degree calmed herself the whole household were upon the spot, overwhelming us with questions and exclamations.

The poor child looked from one to another, and trembled like a frightened bird.

"What is the matter, Janet? Can't you speak and tell us what is the matter?" said Miss Douglass, speaking up distinct and loud, as one does to a deaf person.

"Wait, I pray," I said, impatiently. "Don't you see she is incapable of speaking? Bring some wine, somebody."

Somebody brought wine. It was Tom, and as he gave it to her he muttered something about woman's nerves.

I did not catch it all, but I think Janet did, for the colour began to come back to her face, and she withdrew herself from my arms.

"Thank you! I can stand now, I think," she said, faintly.

We gave her more wine, and then Flora MacVicar, coming to her side, said:

"Now, dear, can't you tell us what frightened you?"

The tone was very gentle, but I noticed that her black eyes were as bright as diamonds.

Janet's lips moved once or twice before any sound was audible. At length she said, low and solemnly:

"I have had a warning."

A sudden pallor and gravity fell upon the group. No one spoke except Tom, who exclaimed:

"Fudge!"

Janet's eyes turned upon him, full of melancholy reproach.

"I have had a warning, Tom," she repeated, still in that solemn, frightened tone.

"What was it, dear? Tell us all about it," said Flora MacVicar.

Janet seemed to try to gather firmness for the story and her face blanched, and her lips grew tense as she said:

"I saw my face in the mirror!"

There was an exclamation from Miss Douglass and her father, and as I looked up, I almost smiled at the alarm in their faces. Superstition is a part of the Scotch nature, and the Douglass family had a broad and deep vein of it.

"I had been trying on some of my bridal things," said Janet, flushing a little, "and standing before the mirror to see the effect, and last of all, I put on this white wrapper. I had been in the front of the glass, and I think I had forgotten what I was doing, for I was not looking at myself, only thinking steadily. But by-and-by I looked up—full into the mirror—and there beside my face and figure was another face and figure—in white, like myself. I gazed at it a moment, and then—I don't know what I did then—I suppose I shrieked."

There was a moment's silence, and then I said:

"Are you sure the face was your own?"

"Yes, only," and here she shuddered, "it was ghastly white, like a dead person's."

Nobody spoke at once, but in a moment Flora MacVicar whispered:

"It is a sign that she will die before the year is out."

Janet caught it, and turned round with a sharp cry. "Yes, I am going to die! and oh! I am afraid to die!"

Afraid to die? Was that strange? A young creature full of warm life, her blood alive and quick, her nerves alert and sensitive, clinging tenaciously to the dear old familiar earth, to go out suddenly and alone—where? Can one do more than guess? Only that we are sure that no smallest corner of the universe is outside of God's ken.

But we forget that too often, and I looked at Janet with a pity that I could not express. Yet I thought if I were her lover, I should surely take her in my arms and soothe, if I could not reason away her alarm.

But Tom stood by like a stupid lout as he was, while I went on volubly about optical delusions, and a great deal of unintelligible nonsense. But it was of no use. Janet only shook her head sadly, silenced, but not convinced, and at last we—the gentlemen—went away, leaving her to her sister and the Miss MacVicar.

I had reflected a great deal upon the hold which a traditional superstition may acquire over a naturally intelligent mind, but I was not prepared for the astounding news that greeted me when I descended to the breakfast-room the next morning. There was to be no wedding after all.

"No wedding!" I echoed, in astonishment.

"No!" Janet said it with a fixed, immovable face. She was appointed to die, and marriage would be a mockery, she said. Nothing could shake her resolution. Reason and ridicule were alike useless. The old Scotch superstition was too strong to be uprooted. "She should never go to the kirk a bride. The veil and the orange flowers were not for her."

Tom fumed, and pished, and sulked, and finally appealed to Janet's father. But Mr. Douglass, believing

in the implicit in the "warning" as Janet herself, dared not exert his authority, and Miss Douglass had cried her eyes and nose red, and was altogether in such a collapsed and incapable state, that she could not make an effort in Tom's behalf.

So two or three days went by, and Janet remained immovable. Under these circumstances Tom developed fast.

At last there was a scene in the library. Tom's words stole out to where I sat with my cigar upon the piazza.

They were coarse and brutal, and I started up with a sudden, indignant impulse. But then came Janet's tones, soft and low between little choking sobs.

"I am afraid I don't love you, Tom. I have been afraid that I did not for a long time; now I am almost sure of it. I think, perhaps, God meant to keep us apart. I am not sure, Tom, but I had rather die than marry you."

Tom came out, presently. I was almost afraid my face would betray my satisfaction to him. But he was as mole-eyed as usual.

"It's all up," he said sullenly. "I don't care though," with half a laugh. "There's as good fish in the sea as ever swim." What do you think of Miss MacVicar's?

"She will do very well," I said. And so I thought. And so did Tom, for two months afterwards, when I was back in the Temple burrowing among law papers, he wrote to say they were married, and were going abroad.

Somewhat Janet's natty little figure became ubiquitous. She peeped out of musty folios, hid between the leaves of Coke and Littleton, and came between me and many a grim-faced client. At length towards the last of the year I wrote to Miss Douglass inquiring for her sister, and begging that I might pay them a visit.

Her letter in reply came promptly. Janet was very delicate, growing thin and white every day, yet there was no apparent physical ailment; if she could be tidied safely over the new year, it would all be well. If I would come and help them through it, they would be thankful.

I went down at once. Janet was lovelier than ever, paler, more *spirituelle*, her large eyes unnaturally bright, her breath coming fast at the least excitement.

I had consulted a London physician, before I went down, and now proceeded to put his directions into practice. I walked, rode and sang with her; I told her all the stories I could remember, and invented new ones, and made her laugh in spite of herself; I charmed her with poetry. It would have been a dangerous practice for me, if I had not been willing to accept the results.

At length the last night of the old year came. She had been in a fever all day, and at dark there was a crimson rose upon each cheek. If midnight passed and nothing happened, she confessed, half crying, half smiling, she should think the warning was no going to come true. She walked the house all day, unable to sit still. At dusk I heard her say, "Now we shall soon know."

By-and-by I coaxed her to listen to the beautiful idyl of Enid. It was new to her, and she could not help listening, though her eyes frequently wandered away towards the clock, which was fast moving on to midnight.

Finishing Enid, I read here and there in the volume, and the music of the verse soothed her, though she presently lost all idea of the sense. At last to my great joy she fell asleep.

When she awoke I leaned over her, and wished her a happy new year. The blue eyes opened wide. They sought the clock.

"It was half-past one."

"Yes, dear. The old year has gone, and with it the frightful phantom, isn't it?"

Her eyes slowly filled.

"I should have died but for you," she said.

"I think you would. But I shall show you how you can pay me." And I did.

Whether Miss MacVicar had anything to do with the face in the mirror I never certainly knew, but I have my suspicions.

A. M. H.

AN ELEPHANT STORY.—Upon another occasion one of my best hunters, being hotly pursued by a very swift and active elephant and in imminent danger of being overtaken, plunged desperately into a bush, whereby his "aggie," (a calico closely-fitting skull cap) was torn from his head and suspended by a twig. The poor fellow, crouching to the earth, distant but a yard or two from the elephant's feet, and in an agony lest his breathing should betray him, and he his death signal, to his surprise, remained unbedded, and the, to him, unaccountable suspense, was but a prolongation of great mental suffering. The cap having attracted the animal's attention, and excited

his curiosity, he played with it like a child with a new toy, now holding it on high on the tip of his trunk, and then apparently examining it most carefully for several minutes, until a shot and the sight of another hunter drew him off in pursuit, and, of course, to the no slight relief of the poor fellow under the bush.

"Mr. Preterick" in Land and Water.

TEMPTATION.

By J. E. SMITH.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars?
That nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps
With ever-burning oil, to give thee light
To the misled and lonely traveller?

It is not to be supposed that Miles, who had been trained in the school of Peter Quin, would leave any means untried to discover the abode of Martha, whom he both hated and feared. Hated, for having subdued and humbled him—and feared, from the power which her knowledge of his crimes had armed her with. Still it was not without considerable misgiving that he set himself to the task; it was necessary to proceed cautiously—for he knew that if his intended victim obtained the least clue to his proceedings, he entertained a suspicion of his design, she would keep no terms with him.

Many men—beggars in the trade of villany—would have commenced operations by setting on parties to watch; but Miles was too cunning for that; the information which he required he determined to obtain himself.

For this purpose, he became a regular frequenter of a public-house in one of the narrow streets leading from the Temple to Blackfriars, which was well known as the resort of the lawyers' clerks and messengers; where, as he expected, he encountered Mr. Griffiths.

Had he known how bitterly the little man resented the contempt with which Martha had treated his advances, Miles would perhaps have been more open in his overtures; as it was he contented himself by an occasional word or nod of recognition—this game continued for several weeks.

At last he ventured upon what he considered a very decided move; he invited Mr. Foster's clerk to a game of cribbage, and lost it—not like a hanger, by such barefaced bad play, that a child might have seen through his intention—but by one or two paga-

lies. "You really play very well!" observed the pompous Mr. Griffiths—for out of the office he considered himself a very important personage.

"But you play better!" replied his antagonist, with the air of a man who did not altogether relish his defeat. "I suppose you will give me my revenge?"

"Willingly," said the clerk, calling at the same time for a second glass of ale—as a general rule, he took but one.

They played, and a second time he was a winner. This slight commencement gradually ripened into a close acquaintance. Still the ruffian was compelled to proceed cautiously—for, with his quick perception of character, he had discovered that his new friend was just as suspicious of any intentions of others as he was himself.

In this manner months elapsed before he had an opportunity of approaching the subject he was so anxious to converse upon.

"Ah, Mr. Griffiths," he observed, one very wet evening, on which they were the only two guests in the little parlour; "I wish I had been a lawyer!"

The clerk raised his eyes from the paper, and looked at him as if astounded at the magnitude of his ambition.

"I know," continued the speaker, "that it requires a long head and much learning; but if I could have found some clever fellow, like yourself, to have taken me as a partner! I might have found the money, and you the brains!"

This time Mr. Griffiths did not think the ambition of his vulgar acquaintance quite so preposterous.

"But I suppose," concluded Miles, "that you will be a partner in time?"

"It is not impossible," replied the little man, in a feigned tone; "but it all depends on the price of a beg!"

"A boy, sir?"

"Yes!" continued the gentleman; "my principal business is only, now, when he is anxious to bring up the profession! Though, heaven knows, of course, this is between our selves—that he has not one equalification for it! He is headstrong as a mule—con-

ceived as a monkey—rude as a bear—and as extravagant as a miser's heir! I have heard the character thus flatteringly portrayed of him by his father's clerk, the generous, high-spirited young man would have known the exact value of the obsequiousness and cringing submission which, in his ignorance of the world, he mistook for attachment.

"Are misers' heirs extravagant?" den and Miles, in a careless tone, as if the answer was a matter of perfect indifference to him.

"Generally," said the clerk; "but not invariably—since I know of one who does not spend the tithe of her income! But then," he added, musingly, "she is rich!"

"A woman!" ejaculated his companion; "that accounts for it—they are more economical than we are! Well," he continued, "I know another, who inherited, a few years since, five thousand pounds of an old curmudgeon to whom people frequently gave alms in the streets!"

"Five thousand pounds!" repeated Mr. Griffiths.

"Yes—and he has doubled it! Now I think he and your lady friend might make a good match of it!"

"She has refused a better offer than that," observed the clerk, with an air of conceit; "but she will never marry—unless," he added, spitefully, "it is the young scapegrace I was lately speaking of; he appears to have found the way to her favour—he is invited to shoot, and pass what time he pleases, at The Grange."

Miles mentally noted the word that had escaped him.

"Perhaps they are of the same age?" he said.

"No—no!" replied the disappointed suitor, of Martha, impatiently; "she is old enough to be his mother!"

"Not the less likely to marry him, for all that!" observed the ruffian, in a philosophical tone; "women are queer creatures—young and old—green and grey at the same time! I should like to have tried my luck with her, for all that!"

"You?"

"Ay—I!"

"You, then," said Mr. Griffiths, "are the man who doubled the five thousand pounds?"

Miles nodded in the affirmative, and his new friend's respect for him evidently increased.

Miles had frequently noticed that Mr. Griffiths brought letters with him, which were doubtless intended for the post—for on such occasions he left at a much earlier hour. This led him to concoct a scheme which promised to gratify his long delayed curiosity at last.

One evening, when he saw that he had a larger number than usual, he proposed to the clerk a visit to Drury Lane, adding, that he had an order for two. The talk took; a hackney-coach was sent for, and off they started. Just as the vehicle entered the Strand, he pulled the check-string, and told the driver to stop at the first post-office.

"Dear me!" exclaimed the clerk; "how fortunate! I had nearly forgotten my letters!"

He drew them from his pocket, and held them ready.

"It is not worth while both of us getting out," observed Miles, as soon as the coach stopped, at the same time taking them from his hand. "Anything to pay?"

"No—franked!"

"All right!" said the ruffian, dropping them one by one deliberately into the box, and his own, which was merely a blank, along with them. As he did so, he contrived to read the address of each. One was to Clement Foster, Esq., Briefly Grange; he had learned all that he wished to know.

The affair passed so rapidly that Mr. Griffiths had no time to reflect on the indiscretion he had committed. How could he possibly suppose anything incorrect in the conduct of a man, whom he believed to be worth ten thousand pounds—who invariably lost to him at cribbage—who treated him to the theatre—and, moreover, insisted upon paying the coach-hire?

They passed the evening together, and parted each mutually pleased with his new acquaintance.

A day or two after, Miles announced that he was about to quit London for a few days, an affair of importance calling him into the country.

"A love affair?" observed the clerk, jokingly.

The fellow who had so cleverly duped him gave him a knowing wink, and owned that a woman was mixed up with it.

The next day he started for Berkshire, having first shaved off his whiskers, and mounted one of those respectable wigs called a "Banyan, George," over his rough, iron-grey hair.

So complete was the metamorphosis, that even Bet declared she should not have recognized him; he appeared quite respectable.

On reaching the village nearest to The Grange, he

contrived, under the pretence of purchasing a small farm in the neighbourhood, to make such inquiries as convinced him that he had at last discovered the retreat of Martha Quin; the next point was, how to avail himself of the information he had acquired. He hesitated little about committing crime—detection was the only thing he feared.

The house, which was large and exceedingly old-fashioned, was what in the country is generally termed a "show-house." It contained a room in which Cromwell was said to have slept, and a large gallery hung with portraits of its former possessors.

It was a bold step to take, but he determined to visit it—and, with this intention, concealed himself several days in the home-wood nearest the mansion, in order to select the most favourable opportunity; not that it was his intention to introduce himself clandestinely—he was too prudent to run that risk more than once; his object was to assure himself of the absence of Martha, and then to walk boldly up, and make his request to the housekeeper.

The third day the occasion presented itself—for scarcely had the carriage with Martha and Miss Wyndham crossed the lawn, when Miles presented himself at the door, and expressed his wish to see the house.

Mrs. Everett hesitated; it was not that she was absolutely forbidden to show it—but she knew the nervous dislike its present tenant had to strangers.

"If there is any objection," said the very respectable-looking gentleman in the brown wig, "I can call some other time; but Farmer Rudge told me you would be happy to show it."

Farmer Rudge was one of the housekeeper's best friends—Miles had ascertained that. His name overcame her hesitation; it was impossible to disoblige the friend of so old a friend. Mrs. Everett even carried her complaisance so far as to invite him into her own room to take a glass of wine after his walk; an offer which her new acquaintance had the politeness to accept.

Cromwell's room was the first that was visited.

"Here it was," observed the lady, as she pointed to the bed on which the great regicide had slept, "that the ghost of the murdered king was supposed to have appeared to him!"

"Do you believe it?" demanded the visitor. If she did not exactly believe it, the housekeeper had a sort of half faith upon the subject, and looked with no very favourable opinion upon those—especially of her own rank—who affected to treat the tradition with derision.

"It was all very well for estates gentry," she used to observe, "to doubt—they had a right to think as they pleased;" but for persons who were no wiser than herself, it was an impertinence—and she resented it accordingly.

Miles very soon perceived her weak point, and took care to improve the favourable impression he had made by expressing his perfect belief in the tale which had been handed down in the servants' hall at The Grange for centuries; and added something about once having heard himself.

In the picture-gallery two things riveted his attention; the first was the portrait which had so excited the curiosity of Martha on her arrival, and which she had caused to be removed from the room of the housekeeper.

"It's devilish like!" he exclaimed.

"Like whom?" demanded his guide.

"Oh, no one that you know!" muttered the visitor.

The domestic did not feel quite so assured of that; she remembered the agitation of Miss Mendez when she first beheld the portrait; recollected the life which the present baronet had been compelled to lead—not that she knew or suspected how chequered it had been; but she made no further observation.

The second object which attracted the attention of Miles was the well-known cabinet of Peter Quin. Like the rest of the furniture in the picture-gallery, it was exceedingly ancient, and not altogether out of place in the locality to which it had been introduced.

"Oliver Cromwell's dressing-case, I suppose?" said Miles, pointing to the piece of furniture.

"Oh dear no!" replied the old woman, with something like an air of disdain at what she considered a vulgar attempt to joke. "The lady who now occupies The Grange brought it with her."

The gentleman in the brown wig could have told her as much.

"It contains nothing but a parcel of old account-books," continued the speaker, "in blue, green-like covers; and an old black dress and shawl which not a housemaid here would condescend to wear!"

He remembered the former dress of poor Martha. "Well," he said, musingly, "it is a singular old place! I should not much like to visit it at night; I should expect to see some of these stately old lords

the walls, "walk out of their frames and dance a minuet!"

"No one ever does visit it at night!" replied Mrs. Everett; "the servants are all too much afraid, and the family apartments are on the other side of the mansion!"

This was important information, and her hearer noted it accordingly.

After running through the rest of the rooms, her visitor took his leave, charged with many kind messages and regards to Farmer Rudge, whose name had served him as a passport.

In his way home he pondered over all that he had seen and heard—and it must be confessed that he had food for meditation. The portrait puzzled him the most; as for the cabinet, there was nothing so very extraordinary in his finding it.

Suddenly he recollected the fragments of the burnt letter which he had discovered in the captain's room, and given to Martha Quin.

"Is he!" he exclaimed; "her wit was quicker than mine!"—ly Grange! Briefly Grange! He, then, is the owner of this large estate—this noble old house and fine title! I always thought he was a gentleman! He the owner of them!" he added with great deliberation. "We are the owners of them—old Quin's death made us partners!"

With these words he hastened his steps towards the little public-house where for the last few days he had taken up his abode, to arrange his plans for the coming night.

"Could I but secure the papers of old Quin," he thought, "I might bid defiance to his granddaughter!"

As he quitted the wood, close by the park-gate, he encountered Clement Foster: the young man had his gun upon his arm, and was followed by the keeper and two dogs.

Miles touched his hat respectfully.

"Who is that person?" inquired Clement of his companion—for, despite the very respectable appearance of the stranger, he had been struck by the sinister expression of his countenance.

"Can't say, sir," replied the keeper; "a new-comer in these parts—from London, I believe. He is after some farm, I hear, in the neighbourhood."

"He does not look much like a farmer," observed the gentleman.

"A great deal more like a housebreaker!" added the former, "or highwayman! I wonder what he wants in the plantation?"

Clement Foster wondered, too, but the affair made only a momentary impression: he had quite forgotten it by the time he reached the house; not so the keeper, who determined to have an eye upon him.

The evening was passed by the two ladies and their guest—although the lawyer's son was almost as much at home as they were—in the usual way—music and reading: it gave Miss Wyndham an opportunity of laying close siege to the heart she had determined to conquer—for she began to suspect that in the event of Miss Mendez not discovering the child of her adoption, his father's fortune was not the only one he would inherit: the quiet kindness of Clement had made a deeper impression in his favour than all her affected sensibility and devotion.

Martha was more clear-sighted than she had given her credit for, and had seen through them.

"Do you believe in presentiments?" said the latter, as they rose to separate for the night.

As a matter of course, the governess did.

"I have a strong impression that something serious is about to occur!" continued the mistress of the house.

"And I have an impression," replied Clement, "that I shall have rare sport to-morrow, and bring you home the deer which George, the keeper, saw struggling through the covert this morning. I have been after him all day—a ball in each barrel."

Miss Wyndham gave one of those pretty little starts which young ladies of a certain age indulge in when they wish to appear interesting.

It was followed by just the faintest scream imaginable—for the speaker held the weapon in his hand: it had been in the drawing-room all the evening.

"Be careful, my dear Clement," said Martha, "for your father's sake! You are his only child, and I know what it is to be deprived of such a tie! Should anything occur—"

"Dreadful!" said her companion, squeezing out a tear.

"You are very careful of me!" replied the youth: "much more so than I deserve! My own dear, good mother could not be more kind! But, of course," he added, fearful that the comparison was not altogether a complimentary one, "you are much younger than she is!"

The governess repressed her inclination to smile—for she had begun to feel jealous of the evident interest which the speakers took in each other; sometimes

she imagined that it was love—and, preposterous as was the idea, it tormented her.

She little knew the hearts of either. Clement Foster's had not yet spoken—at least in the sense she suspected; and as for Martha's, all that she was ever destined to feel of affection was for her lost child.

"The very best person you could have compared me to," observed the lady, smiling at his embarrassment; "for I am too old to be compared even to a sister! Good night, my dear boy!" she added, extending her hand; "and take your gun with you!"

The "good night" was repeated, and all three retired to their separate rooms.

Somehow, Clement, despite the fatigue of the day, could not sleep. The recollection of the stranger he had met in the plantation, and the observation of the keeper returned to him.

"What folly!" he said; "Miss Mendez has resided here for years—is beloved by all the country round for her charity and virtue! What danger! Pah! This old place has set me dreaming!"

The chamber of the speaker was situated in the north wing of the house, directly over the porch. The picture gallery and the great drawing-room—now scarcely ever used—separated it from the south wing, where the rooms of Martha, the governess, and most of the servants were situated. Just as he was on the point of falling into his first sleep, there came a rattling noise; as if a handful of gravel had been thrown up at the window.

He started and listened.

"It can't be morning!" he said.

The noise was repeated. It was the signal by which the keeper was in the habit of waking him, without disturbing the rest of the family.

Clement rose from the bed and opened the casement.

"Is that you, sir?" demanded a voice from below.

"Yes! Who asks?"

"George!"

"And what the deuce, George, do you want at this hour of the night? Any poachers about?"

"Worse, I fear, sir!"

"Worse!" repeated the youth, and his thoughts involuntarily reverted to the stranger he had met in the grounds.

"The man—you know who I mean—has left the little inn where he lodged! Bryant, the shepherd, saw him enter the park more than an hour since! I have hunted through the plantations, and can't find him. He must be in the house!"

"Impossible!"

"Did you pass through the picture-gallery, sir?"

demanded the keeper.

"When?"

"Half an hour since!"

"No! I have been in bed double the time you name!"

"I'll swear I saw a light there!" continued the man

"though only for an instant!"

One of the dogs—for both the pointers were in the room—gave a low growl. A faint scream was heard in a distant part of the house. The animals began to bark furiously.

Clement Foster doubted no longer that some danger threatened the inmates of The Grange. Catching up his gun, he threw open the door of his room, and hastened towards the picture-gallery—both the animals, now thoroughly excited, preeling him.

On entering the gallery, he saw, by the assisting light of a lamp which had been overturned, two persons struggling, and recognized the voice of Martha calling for assistance.

Scarcely knowing what he did, he fired. One of them fell, but which, in the darkness which followed—for the lamp was extinguished—he could not tell.

"Martha! Miss Mendez!" he exclaimed; "for God's sake speak to me! Are you safe?"

A deep groan was the only response.

In his despair, poor Clement felt disposed to turn the remaining barrel against himself.

(To be continued.)

EXTRAORDINARY CLAUSES IN RAILWAY BILLS.—The reports of the Board of Trade on the railway bills of the session are now making their way to the public, and enough of them have been already issued to show how strictly they must be watched. The Metropolitan District Railway Company presents a bill which is to confer on it power to underpin or otherwise strengthen any houses within 100 ft. of their railway. The Board of Trade mildly suggests that it may deserve consideration whether the company ought to be allowed, without the consent of the persons interested, to put a buttress or shore or other stay above the surface of the ground against a house which they do not intend to purchase, as the object of the clause appears to be to preclude persons from claiming compensation on account of their houses being injuriously affected, and compelling them to accept of the offer of

strengthening as the company provide. The Pneumatic Despatch Company having already obtained powers to lay down tubes under the streets of the metropolis for the conveyance of despatches, now asks powers which will enable it to convey passengers and goods. The bill proposes that the company shall have power to purchase compulsorily vaults and cellars without purchasing the houses to which they are attached. This bill also asks the unprecedented power to take buildings or land compulsorily if authorised by the mere certificate of the Board of Trade. The owner of the property taken from him compulsorily is not to have the right to have either the question of the necessity for taking it or the amount of compensation decided by a jury. A single arbitrator appointed by the Board of Trade is to settle the question of compensation. These would be strange laws.

THE HIDDEN TREASURE.

About twenty years ago there lived on the banks of the River Humber, a wealthy farmer, named Peter Judkins.

He had inherited a large portion of his property from his father, but by dint of energy and thrift had brought it up to its present dimensions.

His father, with a view to aid the work of immigration, had cut up one of his large estates into half a dozen small farms, on each of which he erected dwelling-houses, and all things else necessary.

These farms were quickly rented at moderate rates, and old Mr. Judkins found that they paid him better than if he had cultivated the whole of his estate entire.

When Peter Judkins came into possession of his property he continued the small-farm system, and at once put up his rents.

As the time passed on he became one of the most exacting and hard-hearted landlords in the county.

His tenants hated him with the most intense bitterness, and he was known to every one as a mean, miserly man.

He had never married—people said because no one would have him for a husband. But the truth was that Peter was afraid such a step might result in the loss of some of his precious money.

He regarded women as the natural foes of what he called economy, and whenever he heard of a marriage looked upon it as a shameful waste of money.

Commencing with avarice, it was not long before Peter Judkins settled down.

Nothing that partook in the least of the supernatural was too wonderful for him to believe, especially if it seemed to favour his passion for acquiring and hoarding money.

This feeling increased with age, and was at last equalled only by his miserly propensities.

One day, when Peter Judkins was sixty years old, he was riding over his place when he spied a collection of tents on the edge of a strip of woods.

A glance showed him that it was a gipsy encampment.

Now if there was anything he despised and feared at the same time, it was a gipsy, and the idea of having a whole gang of them on his place was something more than he could bear with patience.

He felt sure that he would be ruined, that he would not have left to him anything that could be stolen.

Riding up to the camp, he demanded sternly of the group who were lying about the tents, what they were doing on his place without his permission.

A tall, fine-looking woman rose, and approached him.

"You are Peter Judkins?" she said, coldly.

"I am."

"You own this estate?"

"I do. What of it?" asked Judkins, gruffly.

"I will tell you," she said, sternly. "I am queen of this band. I came here for your good. Beware how you drive us away."

"For my good?" said Peter, looking at her uneasily. "What do you know about me?"

The woman laughed scornfully.

"About you? Do you think you can hide anything in your miserable life from me? When the stars cannot withhold their secrets from me, do you think to baffle me?"

Peter Judkins was a firm believer in the mysterious power of the gipsies, and he listened to the woman in vivid alarm.

"What do you want with me?" he asked.

"I cannot tell you here," replied the woman. "Tomorrow at this time I will be at your house. Then and there I will reveal all. Now go."

Without speaking, Peter Judkins turned from the camp, and rode home slowly.

The woman's mysterious language had made a great impression upon him, and during the remainder of the day he was nervous and restless.

At the appointed hour the next day, the gipsy presented herself at his mansion, and was shown into his private sitting-room, where he was impatiently waiting for her.

He motioned her to a seat, but she remained standing, with her arms folded across her breast, gazing at him fixedly.

"What do you want with me?" he asked, nervously.

She drew from her bosom a worn and defaced pack of cards, and holding them up before him, said:

"These have told me great things about you, Peter Judkins."

"What do they say?"

"They tell me that you are about to receive an immense sum of money."

Peter sprang from his chair, and glanced at her in astonishment.

"They tell me," she went on calmly, "that years ago, before this place was generally known, a notorious pirate sailed up this river, and buried his treasures in a spot which is now included within the limits of this farm."

"Then it's all mine," cried Peter, excitedly. "If it's found on my farm, it's mine."

"Yes; but you must find it first," said the woman, "and that you cannot do without my assistance. You might search for it for a lifetime, and could not find it."

"Well, then," said Peter, "what will you ask for aiding me to find the money?"

"The treasure is in Spanish coins," replied the woman, "and is equal to fifty thousand pounds. Give me two thousand pounds in gold, and I will aid you. I will not move for a farthing less."

"But how do I know," said Peter, "that it will be safe for me to pay you this money? I may lose it, and never see the treasure you speak of."

"I pardon your suspicions," exclaimed the woman, scornfully, "for I know the heart from which they proceed. Take this box," she cried, drawing a curiously carved box from under her cloak, and handing it to him. "Count the money into it now. Then put it into your money-chest, and keep it until you find the treasure, then I will claim it."

"Well, that part is fair enough," said Peter, brightening; "but there is one thing that puzzles me. If you know where this treasure is, why haven't you taken it without letting me know of it?"

"Woe to the gipsy who lays a finger on it," said the woman solemnly. "A nightier power than mine guards it, and I dare not touch it. This is why I do not even ask for a portion of it for my reward. You hate our race, and the spirits that guard it are friendly to you. You may do with it as you will, but I cannot do more than tell you of it."

"This is a very fair story," said Peter thoughtfully; "and I don't see what harm it can do to humour you. If you don't find the treasure I don't pay you anything; and if you do I shall be well rewarded for the outlay."

So saying, he went to the strong chest that contained his money, and counted into the gipsy's box the sum of two thousand pounds in bright gold.

"Now," said the gipsy, "you must hand it to me, go ten steps from me, walk backward to me, take the box, and without looking to the right or the left, or behind you, carry it to the chest, and place it in it, saying as you do so, 'Guard it well till I come.'"

Peter Judkins handed her the box, and going through the mummery which she had dictated, placed the box in the chest, all the while trembling with fear. Then he shut down the lid of the chest, and locked it.

"In ten days," said the gipsy, "I will return to show you the treasure, and claim my reward. Woe to you, Peter Judkins, if you open the box, or remove one pound from it. Remember, though I am absent from you, I shall know all about you. Until we meet again, farewell."

The woman turned and left the room, leaving Judkins bewildered and alarmed. The next morning he noticed that the gipsies had broken up their camp, and departed.

He felt somewhat uneasy at this, but consoled himself with the reflection that his money was all in his strong box, and if he did not get the treasure, he would lose nothing.

Ten and then twelve days passed away, but the gipsy did not return.

At last old Peter resolved to open the box, and take the money out. He removed the lid, and to his astonishment found that the box contained nothing but bits of lead and stones.

The clever gipsy had heard of his superstitious tendencies, and had taken advantage of them to swindle him.

She had provided herself with two boxes, exactly alike, and while Peter was walking backwards to her, had adroitly changed them, and had given

him the worthless one, and carried off that containing the money.

Peter Judkins never saw the gipsy again, in spite of his efforts to find her, and was heartily ridiculed for his folly by his neighbours. He became more miserly than ever after his loss, but was not so superstitious.

THE QUEEN AT ALDERSHOT.

It was a horrid, windy, grey, cold, bitter morning, and we were little inclined to be jolly when we paraded; but I declare to you, my dear Tom, when I heard the general and his staff were ordered to meet "the Queen," who was coming with detachments of the 1st Life Guards from Windsor to visit the camp once more, I could have taken a header into a freezing maelstrom, and would have been followed by the whole battalion, we were so pleased at the news.

I was abroad when she was last here, and not a ray of the Royal smile had ever lighted on our ranks since the long time ago when we saw Queen Victoria, after we returned from the Crimea. There was an immense animation in the camp. I have no hesitation in saying that the visit did immense good, and that a repetition frequent enough would render Aldershot popular, though it was so cold and windy.

Now that the Queen has come among us, we look for a few Royal field-days and a residence in the Pavilion, and in no Court Queen Victoria can hold can she ever be surrounded by a more devoted (I was about to say, more brilliant; but, oh! Tom, our uniforms are atrocious!) throng than on the Surrey Common nigh Farnborough. There's no doubt about it; Loyalty is fed by the sight of Royalty. "*De non existentibus et non apparentibus*," says the axiom, "*eadem est ratio*." Did you ever hear of a sun worshipper in Cimmeria?

As we were drawn up in line, red in the nose and cold in the toes, suddenly there came on us a pleasant warmth of the quickening pulse, as the thuds of the guns told us the Queen was really coming to see her soldiers once more; and when the open carriage came in sight, it was as much as the men could do to keep from cheering like—the deuce.

Her Majesty passed us in an open carriage, with the fair Helena—Tom, dear, Augustenburg is a lucky fellow, and I hope he is braver than Menelaus and handsomer than Paris—*en face*, and a Hohenlohe, who seemed a jolly old girl enough. She was followed by an open carriage with two ladies of the Court.

Her Majesty looked as well as could be; and there was a smile on her lip and in her eye which made us all happy, and which Grey told our colonel he had not seen her wear for five long years. *Eto perpetua!* It was very bitter in the wind, but she drove up and down the ranks, and waited for the march past, and looked at us as if to shame any stray rascal who might have promised to be a Fenian under the influence of drink, and a desire of lucre out of his treason or thirst.

The troops looked pretty well; the Queen looked well; the Princess well and pretty. My manly face could not have had much effect, though I tried my best to look devoted, for I had a good deal of dust in my eyes; and my nasal promontory had an air of "old port" which was quite unwarranted by anything but the east wind.

At last Her Majesty went off to the cavalry, and we marched back as happy as possible in thinking she was often to come back again.

There were some who said the Queen came down to counteract Fenianism. I wish she would try the effect of the cure at the source of the disease, and go over to Ireland, or encourage the Prince of Wales to do so, and stay there as a prince of the blood might well do, just as Prince John did once on a time before him.

LIFE IN OLD GREECE.—The Athenian rose early, and after performing a primitive toilet, repaired forthwith to the market-place, to hear the news, to transact his business, and to make his purchases for the day. If he purposed to entertain his friends in the evening, there was no time to be lost. By seven in the morning the plumpiest of the blackbirds, the whitest of the celery, and the firmest of the great eels from the Theban stew-ponds would have been bought up; and he would be forced to content himself with a string of lean thrushes, and a cuttle-fish whose freshness might be called in question. Perhaps, while he was engaged in beating down the purveyor, he might hear behind him a sudden rush of people; and, looking round, would see two Scythian policemen sweeping the square with a rope besmeared with red chalk. Then he would know that a general assembly was to be held for the despatch of business, and would hurry off to secure a good place. And there he would sit, as an old Athenian describes himself, groaning, stretching, yawning, scratching his head, jotting down

notes, and waiting for the appearance of the president and the committee to open the meeting. And presently, after a sufficiently long interval, the committee would come bustling in; treading on each other's toes, and jostling for a good place; trying to look as if it was they who had been kept waiting by the audience; for human nature is materially the same, whether on the platform of Exeter Hall, or round the tribune of the Athenian assembly. And thereupon the crier would proclaim: "Who wishes to speak about the Spartau Treaty?" and the call would be for "Pericles," and the prime minister would rise, with his right hand thrust into his bosom, and something would be said which is still well worth the reading. And when public business was concluded, after a light breakfast, our citizen would return to his shop or his counting-house until the first hour after noon; and then he would saunter down to his favourite gymnasium, and thence to his bath; for the old Greek did indeed regard his body as a sacred vessel, which he was bound to keep clean, fair, and fit for use, and would soon have neglected his daily meal as his daily exercise.

SCIENCE.

In wood rubbing upon wood, oil, grease, or black-lead, properly applied, reduces the friction two-thirds.

Every day 13,392 tons of water are converted into steam and discharged into the air from locomotive engines alone in Great Britain.

According to Dr. Martin, Sir Isaac Newton had a magnet which was set in a finger-ring, and which, though only three grains in weight, could sustain seven hundred and forty-six grains.

TO BE TAKEN WITH A GOOD DEAL OF SALT.

The alleged discovery of the grand *reus* of alchemists of olden times—the philosopher's stone—whereby silver, mercury, and copper can be transformed into gold, has been just announced in a memoir entitled "The Transmutations of Metals, presented to the Academy of Sciences."

M. Favre has delivered a most interesting lecture on this subject to—as may have been expected—a densely crowded audience. The following is a *résumé* of their doctrines:—

Hitherto the science of chemistry has been founded upon two terms essentially distinct—*extraction* and *combination*. Analysis represents the first, and synthesis the latter. Now, to these two terms we must add a third—*transmutation*, always suspected to exist but never proved. To do this it must be understood that all bodies in nature owe their respective properties solely to the fixation of forces passing momentarily to a static state, but always "evolutionary" in a disposable field of action.

These substances are then all produced by the action of one original and common principle brought into action. Their transmutation is affected by condensation, or by the displacement of the forces which hold them for the moment in equilibrium. It is an exchange between the dynamo-static properties of each metal and the dynamo-tensional efforts exerted by the agent employed; and, since the metals, simple in their chemical order, are compounded in their dynamo-static state, it follows that the transmutation of metals can always take place, provided they are in media, in which the simple elementary conditions will exist to effect the different changes. Such are the principles on which depend the operations of metallic transmutation.

They have their laws; the first is that of solutions. It is on the difference of solubility of the metals that all the secret of transmutation empirically depends. The decisive experiments by which the authors of this discovery demonstrate the transmutation of silver into gold, show that it depends on two distinct operations—the first is to change the state of the silver, producing another substance which is not yet gold; the second consists in bringing the condition of this new undetermined substance to the state of pure gold.

The process is thus described:—A certain quantity of chlorhydrate of ammonia is dissolved in liquid ammonia; this salt should be reduced to a fine powder. If the solution be turbid it is to be filtered; chloride of silver perfectly white, and humid, is then added, and the bottle well shaken up. The chloride of silver is dissolved, the solution becomes yellow, and deposits a precipitate of the same colour, which must be collected most carefully.

The characters of this powder are—1. When introduced into *aqua regia* it is completely dissolved, and a new addition of ammonia precipitates it. 2. It is not fulminating. 3. Lastly, it furnishes gold by the galvanic pile—that is to say, when placed between the two poles of one of Bunsen's elements.

Here is produced the most remarkable phenomenon

—a transformation and a separation simultaneously. The ammonia is the dissolvent of the chloride of silver, and at the same time the reactive of the metal transformed by the chlorine.

FIXING WIND INDICATORS.—The proper point to fix a wind indicator with arrow and dial. The letter N on a wind indicator to a vane should point to the polar north, and not in the direction of the compass north. It is not at all uncommon to find weather-cocks set incorrectly; either the variation of the compass has not been allowed for, or it has been applied the wrong way, thereby doubling the error. The variation of the magnetic needle is, this year, at Greenwich, 20½ deg. W., and the change is about seven minutes annually, decreasing. The variation may practically be taken as 22 deg., or two points, westerly, throughout the British Isles. The true direction of north is, therefore, to the eastward of the magnetic north, here. All that is necessary, then, to set a vane correctly, at any place in our islands, is to face the compass north, and allow the variation towards the right hand; that is, make the north pointer of the vane indicate the direction of N.N.E. shown by the compass. The secular change in the variation of the compass at London is shown by the following table:—

Year.	Variation.	Yearly rate of change.
	deg. min.	min.
1576	11 15 E.	7
1622	6 15 E.	11
1657	0 0	12
1672	2 30 W.	13
1720	13 0 W.	9
1765	20 0 W.	5
1819	24 41 W.	0
1852	22 18 W.	4
1865	20 38 W.	7

The maximum easterly variation at London is not upon record, but it seems probable that it did not much exceed that in 1576. In 1657, the magnetic needle pointed to the true north in this country. From that time it oscillated to the westward, and attained its greatest westerly variation in 1859.

A POISONOUS ROBE.—The German papers state that Professor Maschke, of Prague, received a few days ago a green robe which had been worn at one of the last balls at the Court of Vienna, and the chemical analysis which he made, along with Dr. Lerok, showed that two ounces of arsenic were present in that piece of stuff, the length of which was 28 metres (81½ yards).

The consumption of coal, including waste, in the United Kingdom, amounts to three times the quantity expended in 1845. In the year 1845 the consumption in Great Britain, for domestic and all manufacturing purposes, was 31,800,000 tons, and there were exported in the same year 1,800,000 tons. In 1865, however, there were consumed for domestic and all purposes of manufacture 87,000,000 tons, 9,000,000 tons being exported.

THE MOON.—It is said that a "day in the moon" equals fourteen of ours. It begins with slow sunrise, followed by a brilliant sunshine and intense heat (about 212 degs. Fahr.); the sky is intensely black (there being no atmosphere like ours, to which blue sky is due); the stars are visible, and the horizon is limited; there is dead silence; the cold in the intensely black shadow is very great; and there is no aerial perspective. Thus the moon is no place for man, or any animals or vegetables that we know of. The "night of the moon" (fourteen of our days) begins with a slow sunset, which is followed by intense cold (about 334 degs below zero).

SHIPS' BOATS.—Sir,—The present agitation for the safety of life-boats in cases of shipwreck at sea makes me ask how it has happened that the collapsible boats constructed by Mr. Berthon have been entirely overlooked for so many years. His boats fold longitudinally, and four of them can be stowed in the space required for one of the ordinary construction. They are beautifully shaped for sailing, and are unsinkable, even with a few holes in the bottom. They are lowered from the ship's side in their collapsed state, and on touching the water open out spontaneously, fit for the crew to jump in. They are provided with an inner and an outer skin of vulcanized india-rubber, enclosing air spaces throughout the entire length, divided into many separate compartments. These boats do not discharge their water, but their floating powers are so great that that quality is not of much importance, and might readily be added. Mr. Berthon has constructed several, one fit to carry a hundred men in any sea, at his own expense. During one of his exhibitions I asked the gentleman if he had laid his plans before the Board of Admiralty. "Oh, yes," he replied, "and the answer I got was, that the Royal Navy was not allowed to carry life-boats, because all the men would desert in them;" they re-

ferred him to the merchant service. The ship owners were applied to, and told him they would use them if compelled to do so by Act of Parliament, but not otherwise, unless he could build them cheaper than their ordinary boats; also that it was not the custom in the merchant service to make any preparations for the mere saving of life unless compelled to do so by the legislature. Mr. Berthon's india-rubber skin is of a peculiar kind, made of successive layers of coarse calico cemented with rubber, passed through warm rollers, and afterwards vulcanized in a superior manner. The skin of his large boats is three quarters of an inch in thickness, and as flexible in proportion as glove leather.—I am, &c., HENRY W. REVELEY.

INHALATION OF CARBONIC ACID.

WE now describe Dr. Demarquay's curious experiments on man, and more especially on himself, such as he has published in his "Pneumatologie Médicale."

Having arrived at the conviction that carbonic acid, mixed either with oxygen or air, is not attended with danger, our author resolved to try the action of these artificial atmospheres upon himself. The first mixture he tried was that of nine parts of oxygen and one of carbonic acid.

The inhaling of twenty litres of this mixture produced rather an intense sensation of heat throughout the chest, but more particularly in the immediate vicinity of the epigastrium. This lasted about a quarter of an hour. During the last inhalation the face became slightly flushed and breathing quicker, notwithstanding our author's desire to breathe slowly. A slight headache began to be felt, followed by a little vertigo, which lasted about two minutes, the duration of the whole experiment being only four. No perceptible change occurred in the state of the pulse.

Two of Dr. Demarquay's pupils repeated the experiment in his presence. One of them did not feel anything remarkable; but the other, who was of a full habit, experienced the above symptoms in a still greater degree than our author.

In a second series of experiments, a mixture of sixteen litres of oxygen and four of carbonic acid were inhaled. In this proportion the acid taste of the gas became very perceptible, but was not found disagreeable. After a few inhalations, the epigastrium became the seat of a strong sensation of heat, radiating all over the chest; then came a sort of instinctive feeling that the atmosphere inhaled was not one appropriated to the system; the lungs seemed empty, and there was, consequently, a tendency to inhale more rapidly, and hence a forced acceleration of the respiratory motion.

At the end of the experiment the face was very red, the eyes somewhat prominent, and respiration anxious and hard; the vertigo, moreover, was stronger and more lasting; the sensation of heat at the epigastrium continued for an hour after. The pulse rose from seventy-six to eighty-four, but diminished in force and fulness.

The proportion of one of carbonic acid and three of oxygen Dr. Demarquay found to be scarcely supportable, and nearly produced suffocation; but the pupil who had been least affected in the previous experiments bore it extremely well, while the other was more affected than Dr. Demarquay.

There was neither somnolency nor insensibility to pain, so that carbonic acid could not be used as an anæsthetic.

INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION OF FISH AND WATER PRODUCTS IN FRANCE.—The vast importance of the products of the sea, rivers, and lakes, both as food and for use in the arts, is forcing itself into notice in France, where the Government have organized an exhibition illustrative of this, under the presidency of the Minister of Marine and the Colonies, to be held at Arcachon, a seaport near Bordeaux, in July next. They invite, from the seaports of their own country and the fishing ports of their maritime neighbours, contributions to the exhibition. These are variously classed, and comprehend specimens of cured and preserved fish for food; oil for use as medicine; chemical products extracted from seaweed; shell, amber, pearl, colouring matter, &c., in connection with art; industrial products such as oil, skin, whalebone, sponges &c.; marine manures, shell sand, and seaweed. Another class includes tools and machines for making boats, models of fishing-boats, of oyster-beds, and of salmon-ladders; lines, nets, and fishing apparatus, and oyster dredges. Then there are instruments for preserving and smoking fish, with plans and models of curing establishments, and descriptions of modes of packing and transporting fish. There will be collection, too, of memoirs on the subject of fish and fish culture and management, with plans, charts, drawings, and photographs. For these, prizes will be awarded, according to their respective merits, and the cost of transporting the articles for exhibition will be borne, either altogether or in part, by the administra-

tion of the exhibition. As it is very desirable that the important fishery interests of this country should be creditably represented, Mr. James Caird, of 3, St. James's Square, has been requested by Government to act as British Commissioner at the exhibition. This gentleman has announced that he will be happy to receive and reply to any communication on the subject from persons desiring to contribute to the exhibition. The entry of articles is requested by the beginning of April, and they must be despatched so as to reach Arcachon by the 1st of July.

FACETIÆ.

An Irishman complained of his physician that he kept so stuffing him with drugs, that he was sick for a week after he was quite well!

WHAT IS TO BECOME OF THE MERCHANTS?

Mr. Goods: "What! raise my rent from £100 to £150! It's absurd. What do you expect I am going to pay it out of?"

Landlord: "Well really, I don't know; but I've just had an offer of £150 for it, and thought of course I'd see you first, so that you might have the first chance."

[How very considerate!]

NOT EXACTLY.—"Have you been much at sea?" "Why, no, not exactly; but my brother married a comrade's daughter." "Were you ever abroad?" "No, not exactly; but my mother's name was French."

DROPPING A FEW.—A physician attending a lady several times had received a couple of guineas each visit; at last when he was going away she gave but one, at which he was surprised, and looking on the floor, as if in search of something, she asked him what he looked for.—"I believe, madam," said he, "I have dropped a guinea."—"No, sir," replied the lady, "it's I that have dropped it."

AN ARTIST.

"What is your business?"

"A designer."

"Ah, indeed; then you are a genius."

"They say so."

"And must be well educated?"

"Some say so."

"And what do you design, pray?"

"I design missing a living—possibly if I can, forcibly if I must."

"How?"

"I am full of design on my fellow-men; and if artfulness don't do, I suppose I shall have to try plain honesty."

An Irishman engaged at a drain had his pickaxe raised in the air just as the clock struck twelve, determined to work no more till after dinner, let go the pickaxe and left it hanging there.

YANKEE THERMOMETER.—"A States" paper says, "Our glass went clear forty degrees below nothing, and would have gone much lower, but it wasn't long enough. We have no thermometer in this town, and therefore it gets as cold as it pleases."

A CERTAIN ABLOT was asked why, in the hearing of causes, he always continued to make difficulties, though he was so often wrong. "Why," said he, "I am like the boys who cannot pass a walnut-tree without throwing stones into it, in hope that nuts may fall."

JACOB JENNISTON, praising the hospitality of the Irish after his return from one of his trips to the sister kingdom, was asked if he had been in Cork. "No," replied the wit; "but I saw a great many drawings of it."

BALANCE OF EVIL.—"It is a painful thing," said Jones, who had been deceived, "to have pretended friends, and to find them out." "Yes," said Brown, "but that can happen seldom. The plague of life is that you are always liable to find them at home."

GARRICK AND THE DOG.—A story is narrated of Garrick when acting the mad scene in the tragedy of "Lear." In the days of Garrick wigs were worn by everybody, and a portly butcher, owning one of those hirsute appendages, and a very large mastiff, had managed to squeeze into the theatre with both, and to get a front seat in the pit, close to the box at the side of the orchestra; the theatre was crammed to the ceiling and the weather intensely warm, and the butcher was inconvenienced sadly by his wig, of which he relieved his head, but for some time puzzled as to its further disposition. He, however, caught sight of Dog Tray, crouched close to the wall, and looking at his master with savage benignity, whereupon up went the wig on the dog's head, who took it as kindly as if he had been a newly-crowned aristocrat. While, however, the whole house was transfixed with the sabbility of Garrick's impromptu action of the maniac king addressing imaginary beings, amid storm and darkness, on a wide and desolate heath, Tray suddenly rose on his hind-legs, and unseen by his master, put his fore-paws on the orchestra rail

and surveyed from beneath his wig Garrick with the utmost gravity. Garrick had just come to the passage as he caught the dog's eye. "I'll talk a word with this same learned Theban. What is your study?" He managed to utter the sentence with due gravity, but found it impossible to maintain it, and fascinated by the dog's steady gaze, burst into a fit of laughter, the most uproarious character. The audience took this as a new reading, and the house rang with applause. The actors on the stage surveyed Garrick and each other with amazement, which was heightened by the prolongation of the peals of laughter and delicious pointing of the fingers towards the pit. At length they perceived the cause of the interruption, and all the performers joined in the laughter, and in pointing to the butcher, who sat with the utmost gravity, believing the whole of the pantomime to be part of the regular performance. After a time the whole house, except the butcher, became aware of the matter, and a gentleman in the orchestra box, by way of putting an end to it, seized the wig, and threw it among the musicians. Tray bounded after it, sending the musicians flying in all directions. To go on with the scene was out of the question, and the dropping of the curtain became absolutely necessary to the restoration of order.

POWER OF A PUNCTUATION POINT.

I saw a pigeon making bread;

I saw a girl composed of thread;

I saw a towel one mile square;

I saw a meadow in the air;

I saw a rocket walk a mile;

I saw a pony make a file;

I saw a blacksmith in a box;

I saw an orange kill an ox;

I saw a butcher made of steel;

I saw a punkie dance a reel;

I saw a sailor twelve feet high;

I saw a ladder in a pie, and

I saw an apple fly away;

I saw a sparrow making hay;

I saw a farmer like a dog;

I saw a puppy mixing grog;

I saw three men who saw these too;

And will confirm what I tell you.

Note.—To make this read right, shift the point at the end of each line to the noun in the same line—pigeon, girl, towel, &c.

It is said that Mrs. Stephens, the Head Centre's better-half—though a better-half to him is not saying much that is complimentary to a body—wrote to the governor of the goal where her lord and master had been confined, but got too quickly out of his confinement, to ask the said governor of the goal to be good enough to let her have Mr. Stephens' portmanteau which he left behind in his hurry to leave. The reply has been the humorous but sharp one, that it will be returned with pleasure to Mr. Stephens on his making a personal application.

THE REFORM BILL IN A NUTSHELL.

Here's a Vote for the County to every fourteen Pounds holding, a lot down from fifty: One hundred and seventy thousand, I mean, To the rank of electors I will lift ye.

Chorus.—Let the Bill pass, &c.
I'll enfranchise the mass,
But I'll warrant it won't satisfy any class!

Here's a Savings Bank Suffrage, a notion absurd, I've a notion 'twill meet small approval:
Here's a Franchise for Lodgers—no mind, not a word About nudging down seats for removal.

Chorus.—Let the Bill pass, &c.
All householders now by the ratepaying clause,
Sixty thousand or so, who are kept out,
The Bill will enfranchise—But is there no cause
Why some close boroughs ought to be swept out?

Chorus.—Let the Bill pass, &c.
For a Seven Pound Rental the Bill gives a vote,
Which may please our friend Bright, and his party:
But the best of reformers row not in his boat,
And the cry for Reform is not hearty.

Chorus.—Let the Bill pass, &c.—Punch.
WARNING TO AMATEUR GARDENERS.—A worthy householder called upon a seedman in a neighbouring town, and complained that the onion seed which he had purchased was worthless, not one of the expected plants having made an appearance above ground. The merchant looked serious, and said, "Are you sure you did not sow them *wrong side up*?"

HONOUR TO A MAYOR.—"Wareham of the Cupola" is, it seems, laudably anxious that the world should judge it rightly. All that the Mayor, Mr. Filleter, did about the application to the Prince of Wales for seven pounds, was done out of the Mayor's own head. It seems too that Mr. Filleter, as also might have been expected, is quite unconscious of the snub from Marlborough House, and says, "I never said

sible, gentlemanly letter I never read. It is worth £5 at least merely to know under what excellent influences, and in what very good companionship the eldest son of our Sovereign Queen Victoria is placed." Well, here are five pounds out of the seven, and we are delighted to be able to add, that H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, as representing our Sovereign, Queen Victoria, has not been pleased to signify the slightest objection to Mr. Filleter's taking, in commemoration of his intellectual demonstrations on this occasion, an addition to his present name, and being known for the future by the style and title of Mr. Filleter Veal. —Punch.

LORD PALMERSTON AND EX-GOVERNOR ALLEN. Ex-Governor Allen, of Louisiana, who is now residing in the city of Mexico, and engaged in editing the *Mexican Times*, relates in his journal the following incident in his visit to London in 1859.—

Driving rapidly up the Strand, we met a man walking very briskly, whom we took to be our friend Prescott. We stopped the hansom, leaped out, and immediately overtook him.

Walking side by side with him for some distance, and having eyed him very closely, we were sure that we had our man; so turning sharply around, we slapped him heavily on the shoulder, and said:

"How are you, old fellow? You don't know me, do you?"

The gentleman gave me a freezing stare, and said:

"No, sir, I don't know you."

We gave him another familiar slap, and said:

"Why, is it possible you have forgotten me? Have you never been to Baton Rouge? Don't you know Dan Hickey? Don't you recollect our ball at Brule's Landing? Look at me well. Don't you know A—?"

With great *sang froid* he replied at once:

"No, sir, I have never been at Baton Rouge; I don't know Dan Hickey; I don't know anything about the balls at Brule's Landing. I have looked at you well; I don't know A—"

Now this was to us a stunner. We drew back, and thinking that he might possibly be a brother of our friend Mr. Prescott, we said:

"Sir, be kind enough to tell me your name?"

He said quietly:

"My name is Palmerston."

"What, Lord Palmerston?"

"The same?"

We took off our hat, and said:

"My lord, pardon me for this rudeness. I am an American travelling for information, and pleasure, and took you for one of our countrymen, an old friend of mine."

We shall never forget the quizzical smile that played upon his open, manly features when he replied:

"No matter—mistakes will happen."

A little conversation passed, in which he was kind enough to invite us to call and see him.

MAXIMILIAN is said to be a descendant of the Cæsars. He is certainly the *czar* of Mexico.

"I'll give that girl a piece of my mind!" exclaimed a certain young fellow. "I wouldn't," replied his uncle, "you've none to spare."

"PA! I know why that old-fashioned pistol of grandpa's is called a *horse pistol*." "Why, my son?" "Because it *kicks* so!"

"I say, Brown, what a close shaver Jones is—why, he'll squabble about a penny!" "Well, what if he does?" said Brown; "the less one squabbles about the better."

A PATIENT LAD.—"Eon," said a father, the other day, "I'm busy now, but as soon as I can get time I mean to give you a flogging." "Don't hurry yourself, pa," replied he, "I can wait."

PLAYING WITH HORNETS.

Two mischievous boys were playing on the banks of a river. A boat-load of passengers landed near by. One of the party, a sportsman, found a hornet's nest hanging to the limb of a tree. He shot at the limb, cutting it off, the nest falling to the ground. After some little chat among the party as to the propriety of keeping a distance from the nest, a gentleman said he would give a shilling to any one that would go and pick up the nest. The older of the boys stepped forward and said:

"Give me the money, sir, and I will pick it up."

The money was given him, and he approached the nest, while the crowd of amused passengers were chuckling over the anticipated fun of seeing the greedy boy get stung by the hornets. But the tables were soon turned, and the laugh on the other side; for the boy seized the end of the limb, and swinging the nest in the air, started on a keen run straight for the crowd, who, as soon as they could comprehend the situation, started on a promiscuous run in the

opposite direction. Some screamed, others cursed the boy, but all ran for dear life, while the lightfooted boy was every moment nearing the affrighted passengers. At length the hindmost man—a big, corpulent fellow—completely gave out, and turning upon the boy with uplifted hands and appealing countenance, called out:

"Hold on, boy! for mercy's sake, hold on! It's the best joke I ever saw; but I can't run any further!"

PREJUDICES are like rats, and a man's mind like a trap; they get in easily, and then, perhaps, can't get out at all.

A YOUNG couple had been married by a quaker, and after the ceremony he remarked to the husband, "Friend, thou art now at the end of thy troubles." A few weeks after, the young man came to the good minister, boiling over with rage (his wife was a regular vixen). "I thought you told me that I was at the end of my troubles?" "So I did, friend, but I did not say which end!"

ROBBERS.

Artist: "Great treat on Monday night, wasn't it?" Politician: "Oh, yess, were you that? I thought Gladstone surpassed himself weally—his perwosation was magnific!"

Artist: "Oh, ha, but I'm speaking of Joachim and the Kreutzer Sonata at the Monday pop!" Politician: "Haw!" [Subject dropped.]—Punch.

OUT OF PLACE.

Mrs. Floumcey: "You'll go to church with us this morning, Mr. Pippins?"

Mr. Pippins: "How, weally, tha-anks, no! I-I weally shouldn't know a sock there!"—Punch.

A TRAIN OFF THE LINE.

Train.—Tramway Train, who, because we wouldn't have his tramway in England, has railed at us ever since—has taken to Fenianism; a capital subject for his ravings, since it is sheer nonsense—the only thing he can talk. The report of the gathering at which he spouted ends curiously—"The meeting then adjourned, and it being made known that Mr. O'Mahoney had lost his pocket-book, and several others their watches, three cheers were given for the Irish republic, and the hall vacated." We suppose the robberies were considered as a proof of the spread of the principles of the Irish republicans.—Fun.

NATURE AND ART.—Miss Muffit thinks there must be some reason for Mr. Fitz-Madder looking at her so earnestly. So there is. But he is only thinking whether her position would do for his academy picture of "Julia and the Woodrobin."—Fun.

THE LATEST THING ABOUT THE LIONS.—Certain unbelievers having stated that Sir Edward Landseer has not yet begun to model the Nelson lions, we have much pleasure in being able to contradict the rumour. The great artist has got as far as the paws,—which would seem likely to prove long.—Fun.

HIGHLY FLATTERING.

Irritated Gent: "Now then, young 'un, what are you a starin' at?"

Intelligent Newspaper (continuing to look fixedly at I. G.): "Oh, nothin', sir. I was only a-gazin' into wacapity!"—Fun.

M. JODIN, in a paper recently addressed to the French Academy of Sciences, gives the results of some interesting experiments on the vitality of the leaves of different plants. The main conclusion he arrived at was, that depriving a leaf of oxygen, and keeping it in the dark, will kill it in a few hours.

LONDON AIR.—At the last meeting of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, held on the 20th ult., a paper was read "On Air from off the Atlantic, and from some London Law Courts," by the President. The specimens of air collected by Mr. Fryer when on his way to the West Indies, and those collected in Antigua, are worth remarking, as the first agrees with the figures obtained previously when examining air on the seashore and open heaths of Scotland, where the highest average was obtained; and the second agrees with the numbers obtained in more inhabited, but not closely inhabited places. Those from a law court are interesting; they are the most deficient in oxygen of any specimens found by me during the day in inhabited places above ground. The first is almost exactly the same as the average found in the currents of galleries in mechanical mines; that from the lantern is nearly the same as the specimens found close to the shafts of the same mines, meaning of course the average of many specimens. I have not known any mills or workshops so deficient in air. I consider a room bad when it loses 1,000, and workshops very bad when they lose 2,000 of oxygen out of a million parts where the loss is actually 5,000 less than the part of 10,000. The circumstance

is strange, and I hope unusual. A scientific friend happened to call my attention to it and wished me to examine the air. The moisture from the window was collected and there were several ounces obtained and more might have been easily found. It was perspiration, in great part, the smell of it was distinct. It is putrefying, and decolorises more permanganate now than it did at first. Mere change of air will not purify a room like this—a current must pass through it for a long time until complete oxidation takes place.

TO SPRING.

Straise, Spring, hither ye come.

Warning the hearty winter has stung.

Bidding earth's chilling blasts flee away;

Gilding the land with the sun's golden light;

Painting afresh the scenes that were bright,

Clothing nature neglected so gay.

Spring, Spring, hither ye fling

Winds that breathe the softly—lightly sing.

Careasing the woods as they go;

Bringing the strains of the cuckoo's call.

Notes long estranged from the mantled hall,

To echo the vale through and through.

Spring, Spring, hither ye stray,

Gladning all hearts that ye meet on the way.

A sweet welcome greeting from all.

The milkmaid sings with a blithesome song,

And the ploughboy whistles as plodding along.

All cheerfully answer thy call.

Spring, Spring, hither ye flow,

Causing the trees and the blossoms to glow.

And the meadows look blooming again;

Bidding the long frozen streamlets steal

Down the rough glen with a musical rill,

And smilingly gleam o'er the plain.

Spring, Spring, onward ye go,

Decking the meads with the flowers ye throw.

Bearing the new year's birth;

Revealing to eyes midst all thy gems—

Midst all thy emerald diadems—

The hand that fram'd the earth.

G. C. S.

GEMS.

THE high-minded and the low-minded come in contact without mixing, like oil and water.

He is a great simpleton who imagines that the chief power of wealth is to supply wants. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it creates more wants than it supplies.

SUCCESS IN LIFE.—Self-help alone makes a man succeed. If he has confidence in himself he may despise the world, because he is sure to get on by his own determination to succeed.

THE WEB OF LIFE.—We sleep, but the loom of life never stops; and the pattern which was weaving when the sun went down is weaving when it comes up to-morrow.

GOOD HUMOUR.—Good humour is the clear blue sky of the soul, on which every star of talent will shine more clearly, and the sun of genius encounter no vapours in his passage. 'Tis the most exquisite beauty of a fine face; a redeeming grace in a homely one. It is like the green in a landscape, harmonizing with every colour, mellowing the glories of the bright, and softening the hue of the dark; or like a flute in a full concert of instruments, a sound not at first discovered, by the ear, yet filling up the breaks in the concord with its deep melody.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

GOLD LACQUER.—Put into a clean four-gallon tin one pound of ground turmeric, one and a half ounces of gamboge, three and a half pounds of powdered gum sandarach, three-quarters of a pound of shellac, and two gallons of spirits of wine. When shaken, dissolved, and strained, add one pint of turpentine varnish, well mixed.

FURNITURE POLISH.—New wood is often French-polished. Or, the following may be tried:—Melt three or four pieces of sandarach, each the size of a walnut, add one pint of boiled oil, and boil together for one hour. While cooling add one drachm of Venice turpentine, and if too thick a little oil of turpentine also. Apply this over the furniture, and after some hours rub it off; rub the furniture daily, without applying fresh varnish, expect about once in two months. Water does not injure this polish, and any stain or scratch may be again covered, which cannot be done with French polish.

CHAPPED HANDS.—Chapped hands are annoying always. They may in a great measure be prevented

by using very little soap, if any, keeping it on as briefly as possible, washing it off clean, and then finishing the washing with water to which a little vinegar is added—a teaspoonful to a pint of clear water will answer. This neutralizes any alkali of the soap left on the skin, and gives it a soft feeling, while it stops the destruction of the cuticle, and saves chapping. Diluted vinegar is also good as a final washing after shaving the face, as it also saves the skin and prevents the alkali from bleaching the whiskers. A little tallow or even lard, thinly applied at night, or when going out into the cold air, to the hands and face, and well rubbed off if necessary, goes far towards preventing further chapping, and promotes the healing of the cracks already formed.

STATISTICS.

COAL IN FRANCE.—The production of coal in France has greatly increased within the last ten years:—

	Metrical Quintals.
In 1856 it amounted to	72,257,305
1857	79,017,567
1858	78,525,674
1859	74,825,718
1860	80,991,084
1861	84,000,000
1862	94,000,000
1863	105,944,000
1864	111,000,000
1865	113,000,000

The demand is equal to the supply, which explains the firmness of prices, with a tendency to a further rise. The price of iron in Paris varies from 218 francs to 220 francs the ton, 210 francs at Lyons, 225 francs in the South, and from 215 francs to 218 francs in the West. Swedish iron is quoted at 350 francs the ton at Bordeaux.

SPIRITS FOR CONSUMPTION IN 1865.—In the year 1865, 20,625,308 gallons of home-made spirits paid Excise duty in the United Kingdom as intended for beverage, an increase of more than 400,000 gallons over the quantity in 1864. The increase occurred in Ireland. The quantity distilled in Ireland on which duty was paid in Ireland, with the excess of import over export, amounted to 4,512,369 gallons as against 4,090,119 gallons in 1864. 3,698,762 proof gallons of rum were imported into the United Kingdom in 1865 and retained for home consumption, and 2,666,394 gallons of brandy, making the whole quantity of spirits for consumption 26,990,464 gallons in 1865, as against 20,248,530 gallons in 1864.

MISCELLANEOUS.

HER MAJESTY is expected to make a spring trip to Balmoral in May.

It is said that a monument to the memory of the King of the Belgians is to be erected in the Chapel Royal, Windsor.

FROM 1851 to 1861 the population of Canada increased at a greater rate than even that of the United States. The increase was 36 per cent.

It is said that the Queen means to settle £12,000 a year on Princess Helena, so that the young couple will have £18,000 a year to begin life with.

IN 1666 tea was sold in London for 60s. per pound, which cost in Batavia from 2s. 6d. to 3s. 6d. per pound. It continued at this price till 1707. Green tea was not used till 1715.

A SORT of Tusand Museum has been opened on the Boulevards in Paris. The Chamber of Horrors consists of a cellar in which are exhibited the judicial implements of torture of the fifteenth century applied to modern wax.

A SECOND very important discovery of coal has been made in the eastern island of the Falkland Isles. The coal is highly bituminous, and promises to be an excellent flaming coal for steamers.

WE hear that the Prince de Joinville is in treaty with Mr. James Campbell, of Hampton Court, for the purchase of Cardigan House, Richmond. The house in question was the residence of the late Miss Roberts, who purchased it from Lord Cardigan. It was at one time in the possession of George IV., when Prince Regent. It adjoins the Marquis of Lansdowne's house.

THE average annual cost per volunteer, as shown by the estimates, is a little under £2, to which should be added £1 more for arms, and ammunition, making a total charge of £3. The average cost of the yeomanry is above £6 per man, or more than double. The cost of the militia per head is probably about fourfold that of the volunteers, and that of the regulars about twentyfold.

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NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A CONSTANT READER.—The case is so complicated as stated by you, that you would do well to consult a solicitor.

MISS NEVERLEIGH offers herself matrimonially. She is nineteen, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, hazel eyes, light brown hair, well domesticated, and would make a good wife.

BLANCHE, twenty-five, 5 ft. in height, with dark curly hair and blue eyes, wishes to correspond matrimonially with a fair gentleman.

E. C.—No lawyer would advise on your case until after careful perusal of the documents. Twenty years' adverse possession bars a claim.

EVA R., eighteen, an only child, in the middle station of life, 4 ft. 11 in. in height, hazel eyes and black hair, would like to correspond with a dark gentleman. *Carte de visite* requested.

M. B. T. wishes to correspond with a young gentleman of good education, fair complexion, about 5 ft. 4 in. in height, is good looking, has dark brown hair and eyes, is sweet seventeen, and wishes for a good husband.

E. R. W. wishes to correspond with a young gentleman of good understanding, dark complexion, about 5 ft. 4 in. in height, aged twenty-one. "E. R. W." is good looking, fair, with light blue eyes, 5 ft. 3 in. in height, and eighteen.

BONNIE KAT., who is seventeen, with dark eyes, curly hair, fair complexion, is in want of a husband. She is thoroughly domesticated, and would make a loving and affectionate wife.

ANNIE and ELIZA, two friends, would like to correspond with the sons of two tradesmen. "Annie" is tall and very fair. "Eliza" has dark hair and eyes; both are educated and domesticated.

LIZZIE, a widow, twenty-eight, without encumbrance, would like to correspond matrimonially with a gentleman older than herself. She is fair, blue eyes, middle height, moderately good looking, domesticated, and a cheerful companion.

BLUE-EYED NELL and GIPSY BELL would be happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with two young gentlemen from eighteen to twenty. Both are of medium height, pretty, and domestic. Handwriting would be improved by more care.

A. C. M.—If our correspondent will kindly favour us with a legible copy of his sonnet, "Fanny," it will receive our best consideration. Uncomprehensible as it is at present, we should do both "A. C. M." and ourselves an injustice by offering an opinion as to its merits.

F. L., who is in want of a wife, will be happy to correspond with a lady not over twenty-two, good looking, and with about 1900 a year. "F. L." is twenty-three, considered handsome, about 5 ft. 1 in. in height, and well proportioned.

ORCA, twenty, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, with dark complexion, considered very good looking, and possessing a small income, which will increase when he is of age, is desirous of meeting matrimonially with a young lady about eighteen; one possessing a small income preferred.

LURLINE, who wishes to obtain a situation as dresser to an actress, had better advertise her desire and qualifications in a newspaper. If "Lurline's" qualifications be as stated, there is little doubt that by making her desire known in the proper quarter, she will be successful.

N. W. Y.—You have a remedy in the Divorce Court, on proof of the adultery and desertion. You may sue in Chancery for maintenance, or summon him at a police court. You had better consult some respectable practitioner.

A CONSTANT READER desires to know the necessary qualifications for an appointment as an officer or tide-waiter in the Custom House? A good character, fair handwriting, some knowledge of arithmetic, and the interest of a Member of Parliament.

EDWARD SUMMERS.—The burnish on bright steel is given by polishing upon a leaden wheel. We know of no black polish used on wrought steel, except the domestic black lead, to be obtained at any oil shop. There is a method of blackening the exterior of iron work by gas tar.

ANNIE and MARK.—The former, who is nineteen, tall, with a clear, olive complexion, dark eyes, and considered handsome, wishes for a husband, tall, and not over thirty. "Mark," who is eighteen, fair, with auburn hair, hazel eyes, and good looking, would like to correspond with a gentleman tall and dark. Both have money.

LETTIE and BESSIE, nineteen and twenty, are desirous of entering matrimonially into a correspondence with two gentlemen. "Lettie" (to use her own words) ignores flattery, and wishes to be thought plain and unassuming. In person she is tall and slight, has dark hair, blue eyes, with features of Grecian mould. In disposition most amiable. Owing to a reverse of circumstances in her family, she has no fortune, her only recommendation being her beauty and virtue. "Bessie" is not quite so tall, but has a commanding appearance and a fine figure. Her massive golden tresses

hang in loose profusion over a neck of marble purity; eyes of azure blue, and a mouth of expressive sweetness. In temper and disposition she is sweet and submissive, with most engaging manners. Should any gentleman wish to enter into correspondence with either of the above named ladies, he will find in each all the qualities for rendering a home happy.

W. L. P., nineteen, 5 ft. 7 in. in height, with light complexion, brown hair, blue eyes, and considered very good looking; possessing an income, would like to correspond matrimonially with a young lady from seventeen to twenty, of medium height, good looking, and possessing a small income. *Cartes* to be exchanged.

ALICE and MAUDE are cousins; the former is seventeen, with fair complexion, hazel eyes, brown hair, and 5 ft. 1 in. in height. The latter has fair hair, blue eyes, is eighteen, and 5 ft. 5 in. in height. Both being accomplished and with domestic habits, would like to correspond matrimonially with two mechanics. *Cartes* exchanged.

NELLY and JENNY, friends, wish to correspond with two young gentlemen about the age of twenty-two. "Nelly" is of the medium height, with hazel eyes, brown hair, and is considered pretty. "Jenny" is petite, ladylike, and good looking, with dark hair and eyes, and fair complexion; both about the age of seventeen. The gentlemen must be fair, with good prospects, but not particular as to height. *Cartes* to be exchanged. Handwriting good.

A. H. J., who is twenty, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, dark, considered good looking, the son of a respectable tradesman, and heir to some property, would like to correspond with a young lady not more than nineteen or twenty. She must be well educated, industrious, and qualified for any household duties, with a fortune, good tempered, and good looking. *Cartes* to be exchanged.

BEAUTIFUL SEA.

Beautiful Sea! thy restless waves,

As they foam and break on the sounding shore;

Murmuring ever and anon,

Coarsely o'er and o'er;

Seem to be whispering, Beautiful Sea!

Whispering ever their story to me.

In the summer day, 'neath a cloudless sky,

When the billows merrily play,

And sunbeams dance on their sunny crests,

Making gems of the glittering spray;

They seem to be whispering, Beautiful Sea!

Whispering ever their story to me.

Or, as the sun, 'neath the western wave,

Sinks at the close of the weary day,

Flooding thy breast with a holy light,

That fitfully, glimmering, dies away,

They seem to be whispering, Beautiful Sea!

Whispering ever their story to me.

Then, when the moon's mysterious light

With silver slips each rolling wave,

Or when the "Storm King" rides abroad,

And darkling waters mildly rave,

Still are they whispering, Beautiful Sea!

Whispering ever their story to me.

MADLINE would like to correspond with a gentleman

matrimonially. She is twenty years of age, with dark hair and eyes, moderately good looking, fully domesticated, and agreeable. "Madline" has an income of 3000 a year; would like the gentleman to be fond of home, and also mixing in good society, as she has been accustomed to it always. *Cartes* to be exchanged.

CICERO would like to correspond matrimonially with a young lady under twenty. She must be good looking, good tempered, fond of home, and calculated to make a man happy; money no object. "Cicero" is twenty-two, 6 ft. in height, with brown curly hair, slight moustache and whiskers, dark eyes, considered very good looking, good tempered, fond of home, and possessing an income of 3000 a year. *Cartes* to be exchanged.

A. Y. and A. O. (two friends), living in Cornwall, wish to correspond with two young ladies. A. Y. is twenty-one, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, dark hair and eyes. A. O. is twenty, 5 ft. 5 in. in height, blue eyes, and dark brown hair. "A. Y." and "A. O." hope this may lead to an honourable courtship with some fair correspondent of THE LONDON READER.

BESSIE LISCOMB should try the recipe given in reply to "Impatient Lizzie." "Bessie" desires to know whether the following recipe for the face and hands is good. Oil of myrrh 1 an ounce, oil of benz 4 ounces, oil of tartar 1 ounce, oil of spearmint 1 an ounce. Omit any of our readers answer the question. The colour of "Bessie's" hair verges upon, without quite reaching, auburn.

NICHOLAS, rather tall, twenty, would be glad to have an introduction to some tall young lady about eighteen. "Nicholas" is of steady habits and fond of home, and of course would prefer one similarly disposed. "Nicholas" does not intend marrying at present, not being in a position to warrant such a step. Any young lady that would not object to becoming friendly on these terms, "Nicholas" would be delighted to hear from.

A RAILWAY SERVANT.—The best wash for the head is the yolk of egg. Rub it well in, wash off with cold soap and water; finally pour clear cold water upon the head. Use the bath frequently (under medical advice if there be any constitutional disorder). Scurf commonly follows ringworm, but nature tends to conquer the difficulty; in fact, the excretion of scurf is nature's own method of getting rid of a superfluity. You may assist her operations, but do not strive to check them.

IMPATIENT LIZZIE.—To whiten the hands, mild emollient soaps, or those abounding in oil, should alone be used. The strong, coarse kinds of soap, or those abounding in alkali, should be rejected, as they render the skin rough, dry, and brittle. The use of little quantities of lime-water imparts a delicate whiteness to the skin, but should be only occasionally used, and should be well washed off with a little warm water to remove the odour.

HISTORICAL.—The life of our good Queen has been assailed by would-be assassins on three occasions, viz.: June 10, 1840 by Oxford; July 3, 1842, by Bean; June 27, 1850, by Pate. The latter, by the way, was rather an assault by a

lunatic than an attempt at assassination. Attempts have become lessened since they have been reduced from the questionable dignity of high treason, and the cowardly, and being sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered, are imprisoned and soundly flogged at intervals. Thus, it appears that even the most morbid minded criminals can see no glory in corporal punishment. The hateful crime of garotting seems to be on the wane from the same wholesome punishment being administered. The life of Louis Philippe was attempted seven times, viz.: in 1833, 1835, 1836 again, 1838 again, 1840, 1846, and 1846 again. Five attempts have been made on the life of the present French Emperor, viz.: 1852, 1853, 1855, 1855 again, and 1858.

G. L. N. E.—For advice for your deaf and dumb child, apply to Dr. Yearley, 75, Saville Row, Regent Street, W. No doubt, like other members of his liberal and philanthropic profession, he devotes certain hours daily, regularly, to the gratuitous aid of the poor. Or take the child to the Deaf and Dumb Asylum, Old Kent Road, S.E., for the education and provision of deaf and dumb children, who are admissible only between the ages of eight-and-a-half and eleven-and-a-half. Application should be made to the secretary.

PAUL.—For a list of the directors of the New River Company, you had better apply to Frederick Jervis, Esq., Secretary, New River Office, near St. Giles's Wells, E.C. This scheme, the first to supply London with water on a large scale, was suggested and carried out by Sir Hugh Myddelton, at the time a man of great wealth. It reaches from Aynall, in Hertfordshire, to Islington, and was opened on Michaelmas day, 1613, after being in progress five years. Although the shares in this company are now, we believe, of almost fabulous value, the scheme was only raised by public-spirited projector. By way of compensation, however, he was raised to a baronetcy, and died in 1633, leaving a handsome legacy to the Goldsmiths' Company, of which he was a member.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.

P. P. P., thinking possibly that "E. S." might suit him for a wife, would like to correspond with her, and would send her his in return. "P. P. P." has been in business, though he is not in any at present, but he is fond of home.

W. P. would like to correspond with a view to matrimony with "Kate," 41 also be in earnest. He is twenty-eight, 5 ft. 4 in. in height, dark complexion, and in receipt of a good income. *Cartes* exchanged.

M. B. T. would like to correspond with a view to matrimony with "Kate," 41 twenty-five, tall, with dark curly hair and whiskers. *Cartes* exchanged.

MARIA L. would be happy to correspond with "E. R. W." She is nineteen, fair, with light brown hair; hazel eyes, 5 ft. 1 in. in height, and would make a suitable wife for a tradesman, being very domesticated.

J. EMMA F. having sent the appeal of "E. R. W." is very sorry to hear that he is so unhappy for want of a wife; would like to be acquainted with him matrimonially, and would make him as happy as possible. *Cartes* to be exchanged.

CLARA L. would be glad to open a correspondence with "E. R. W." She is fair, considered good looking and genteel, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, nineteen, thoroughly domesticated, good tempered, and the daughter of a tradesman. *Cartes de visite* to be exchanged.

M. B. M. is willing to correspond with "Procion," and would be glad to know if he has more than one child, and whether boy or girl, and the age. Is "Procion" dark or fair, and is he musical? "M. B. M." is a good musician, fond of her home, and very domesticated. If "Procion" will answer these particulars and enclose his *carte*, an arrangement can be made respecting an interview.

CHARISSA E. H., in answer to "Ormond A. A." begs to offer herself to his notice. She is just seventeen, considered pretty by her friends, and will have nothing on the death of an aunt. An interview would be desirable. Will "Ormond" forward his *carte*?

M. B. would be happy to correspond matrimonially with "E. R. W." She is nineteen, with blue eyes, dark brown curly hair, and rather short.

LADY MAX would be happy to correspond with "Franklin Dunbar." She is eighteen, fair, with blue eyes, golden brown hair, and an orphan; will have a small fortune when of age, and considered handsome by her friends.

G. P. would be happy to correspond with "Maria," and exchange *cartes* with a view to marriage. "G. P." is twenty-three, 5 ft. 6 in. in height, of gentlemanly appearance, and comfortably situated.

A. A. would be happy to correspond and exchange *cartes* with "L. S." "A. A. A." is French by birth, thirty-three, tall and dark, very fond of home, and of a loving disposition; has travelled much, and has a mind to large business transactions, but no money.

STEPHEN S. begs to inform "Agnes" "M. E. G." and "Grace H." that he is anxiously waiting to hear from them. A. B. forty, holding a respectable government situation, with a salary of about 2000 a year, would be happy to correspond with "Laurel B. E." *Cartes* exchanged.

SIMON, nineteen, with brown hair and blue eyes, wishes to correspond with "Leah E." When of age will have an income of 3000 a year. "Simon" is fond of home, and would make a loving husband. *Cartes de visite* requested.

J. M. and J. S. are desirous of entering into a correspondence with a view to matrimony with "Alice and Kate." "J. M." is twenty-five, about 5 ft. 7 in. in height, rather dark hair and curly, and good looking. "J. S." is twenty, is about 5 ft. 4 in. in height, dark, dark curly hair. Both are in good positions of life, and very fond of home and its comforts.

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